



POLICE STATIONS CLOSURE 'UNFAIR'

Report by Andrew Turton

POLICE station closures are 'unfair and unnecessary' according to an MP, after dates when doors will shut for good were confirmed.

Closure dates for 13 police stations in the Black Country have been confirmed as part of £8.6 million cuts — and Netherton in Dudley is first to go.

West Midlands Police is shutting 28 stations in total across its area. The Netherton police base will shut on January 31 alongside others in Wolverhampton and Great Barr.

Dudley station will follow on August 31, with Halesowen police station due to close on January 31, 2017. Kingswinford police station is also expected to close within the next 18 months.

West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner David Jamieson said the force had to take 'difficult decisions'.

But Dudley South MP Mike Wood, whose constituency covers Netherton and Kingswinford, said the move would have a major impact.

"There is no requirement for the commissioner to pursue his plans to close stations in Kingswinford and Netherton," he said.

Listen

"I have said that closing two stations within my constituency was both unfair and now unnecessary."

"The Government, following representation from MPs like myself, has changed the formula for funding forces such as West Midlands Police and, as a result, its budget will not face any budget reductions."

"Therefore the reasons for closing any of the named stations is no longer viable and the Commissioner should do as the Chancellor has done — listen to representation and change his mind," said the Conservative MP.

Councillor Elaine Taylor, for Netherton, Woodside and St Andrews, Dudley, said: "We have been told the closure of our station is still happening but they are looking at having an office in the locality so the public still have that service and that presence in the area. We are keeping our PCSOs, which we are very happy about."

Commissioner Jamieson said: "Between 2010 and 2015 West Midlands Police was cut harder than any other force in the country which means we still have difficult decisions to make."

"My priority always will be people not buildings. Many people from across the political divide have realised this. The overriding view of police professionals is that officers, not buildings keep people safe."

Dudley North Labour MP Ian Austin and Conservative MP for Halesowen and Rowley Regis James Morris have campaigned against station closures. But Margot James, Tory MP for Stourbridge, has supported the move, previously saying that the closures would have 'minimal impact'.

IT'S HAPPY EVER AFTER FOR BILL, 90, AND FLO, 96



The happy couple, 96-year-old Flo Marshallsay and 90-year-old Bill Griffiths were married at St Hilda's in Warley Woods

DEARLY beloved, we are here to witness the story of Britain's oldest newly weds — inspirational Black Country couple Bill Griffiths, aged 90, and 96-year-old Florence 'Flo' Marshallsay have proved it is never too late to live happily ever after.

The pair, who have known each other for almost 20 years and lived together for the best part of a decade, exchanged their vows at a packed St Hilda's Church in Warley Woods.

Albion fan Bill wore a Baggies tie with his suit while Flo, who was given away by grandson Mark, donned a dress from John Lewis.

The occasion was led by family friend Reverend Paul Hinton. Flo, who ran the Malt Shovel pub in Dudley for nearly 40 years, said: "Reverend Paul was mentioning all these countries and I didn't know what he was on about. Then I worked out they have all been saying we're the oldest people to get married."

"The church was full, it was amazing. It's been absolutely wonderful."

Father-of-three Bill, a former engineer, used to go dancing with his late wife Joan, until she died in 1997. It was though dancing that he first met mother-of-two Flo. After Joan died the couple became inseparable with Joan eventually agreeing to move in to Bill's house in Oldbury. Bill popped the question to Flo last year. "I was gobsmacked when he asked me to marry him," added Joan.

Mr Hinton said: "It is not every day that a vicar anywhere has the privilege of marrying two people whose combined ages would make a very good cricket score. And it is certainly not every day that nearly 200 years of wisdom, experience and love are brought together to make these age-old vows."

Mr Hinton said: "It is not every day that a vicar anywhere has the privilege of marrying two people whose combined ages would make a very good cricket score. And it is certainly not every day that nearly 200 years of wisdom, experience and love are brought together to make these age-old vows."

SECURITY

Pupils evacuated due to bomb hoax

A SCHOOL in Halesowen and three schools in Sandwell were evacuated after hoax bomb threats on Tuesday.

Police attended Leasowes High School in Halesowen, Brinstall Hall Academy, Oldbury Academy and Holly Lodge in Oldbury but, following searches, West Midlands Police said that no bombs or suspicious objects had been found. Dudley Councillor Ian Cooper, cabinet member for children's services, said: "The situation was dealt with quickly and safely."

● Probe after scare — page 3

ACCIDENT

Motorist dies after sports car hits tree

A DRIVER died after his sports car crashed into a tree and lamp post near Stourbridge.

Other motorists attempted to save 24-year-old Lee Wassell, of Clee View Road, Wombourne, following the crash on the A458 Bridgnorth Road, near Stourton, but he was pronounced dead at the scene by paramedics.

Floral tributes have been placed at the scene of the accident, where his Subaru Impreza crashed at 12.50am on Saturday.

HONOUR

Tree planting tribute to Holocaust hero

A TREE will be planted in Mary Stevens Park to honour the Stourbridge man dubbed 'the British Schindler'.

During the 1930s Major Frank Foley worked as a passport controller in the British Embassy in Berlin and issued travel documents so Jewish families could escape Nazi persecution. He also hid people in his home and it is believed he saved more than 10,000 Jews from the gas chambers.

Somerset-born Major Foley died in 1958 in Stourbridge, the town he called home after the Second World War. The civic ceremony takes place at 11am on January 30.

INSIDE

MEMORIES OF THE STARMAN



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Council pay out £380k in injury claims

DUDLEY Council has paid out more than £380,000 to people on injury claims since 2013, new figures reveal.

The cash-strapped authority received 609 claims from 2013/14 to the present date, with 121 of those claims successful.

In total, the council has been forced to hand out £387,411 in that period.

The biggest claim was on July 5, 2013, when the authority had to pay £18,120 for a break or fracture caused by a pothole.

The council faces huge financial challenges in the next five years and has just revealed a second tranche of budget savings to contend with.

UKIP Councillor Paul Brothwood said the cash pot paid out was money the council could ill afford to spend and needed to be reduced.

Cabinet member Councillor David Sparks said the council worked hard to ensure the borough was safe and clean but could not prevent 'unavoidable' incidents.

Councillor Brothwood claimed the extent of the injury payouts suggested a lack of investment by the authority. He said: "I think this is a reflection of the poor investment from the council into our roads and pavements. I know money from central Government has been made available but not a lot of it seems to have been spent in the borough."

"I think the level of money paid out is a consequence of not improving the roads and pavements at the same time - instead of doing one then coming back to do the other," Councillor Brothwood added. "It's far more cost effective to do them all at once. I would far rather that £380,000 had been spent on improving Dudley borough's roads."

Finance boss Councillor Sparks said: "We work hard to ensure the borough is a safe and clean place to be but obviously there will be unavoidable occasions where incidents can happen. We have a robust process in place to evaluate claims coming in to the council, and where we are found to be at fault, those cases are dealt with appropriately."

Last chance to sign up for energy auction bid

DUDLEY residents have only got just over a week to register for an energy auction that council bosses say could save them hundreds of pounds on their bills.

More than 5,000 people have already registered with the Big Switch campaign backed by Dudley Council.

The more people who register for the auction, the better the deal offered by energy companies.

The last auction attracted nearly 800 people and 98 per cent of them made savings.

The closing date for the latest auction, in which the public join together to get a better deal, is February 1.

Councillor Pete Lowe, leader of the council, said: "As a community council, we are extremely pleased with this successful initiative which is free and easy to join. Our Big Switch auctions are able to secure energy rates that are not available direct from suppliers or price comparison sites."

"Anyone who signs up is under no obligation to switch suppliers, but with savings of an average of £300 a year, more and more people are seeing the benefits of switching to this collective way of buying energy."

The scheme is open to all householders, including people living in rented accommodation, those with a prepayment meter or people paying for dual fuel or gas and electricity separately, and those with a fuel debt of £500 or less. Visit www.dudley.gov.uk and search for Big Switch or call 0300 555 2345 for details.

Rogue traders guilty of harassing elderly

BOSSSES at a roofing firm have been found guilty of harassing customers with sales tactics.

After a four-month trial, Summit Roofguard Ltd director Sarah Beadle was found guilty of 28 various counts of unfair, misleading or aggressive commercial practices.

The jury at Wolverhampton Crown Court also decided the firm's co-director Martin Evans was guilty of 24 charges.

Summit Roofguard, which had an office in Birmingham, claimed to be the largest installer of fascias, soffits and guttering in the region. The prosecution was brought by Dudley Council trading standards after customers across the Black Country were targeted.

General manager Trefor Prytherch was found guilty of two counts, employees Derrick Fisher and Glenys Bolton were each guilty of four.

The offences occurred between 2011 and 2014, and the court was told the firm had since ceased trading. The annual turnover of the combined company stood at almost £4 million in 2011.

Aggressive

One of the victims was pensioner Betty Tipper, of Brierley Hill, who was sold windows and guttering by Summit Roofguard to replace products installed just four years earlier. Beadle and Evans were found guilty of engaging in an aggressive commercial practice in regard to Mrs Tipper, who was plagued by phone calls from the firm.

Another pensioner targeted was 88-year-old Jack Hill, from Brierley Hill. Beadle, Evans and Prytherch were all found guilty of engaging in an aggressive commercial practice regarding Mr Hill.

Evans, 58, from Lower Broadheath, Worcestershire; Beadle, 39, of Yew Tree Road, Moseley; Prytherch, 57, of Crawley, Sussex; Fisher, 64, from Wootton Waven, Warwickshire, and Bolton of New Oscott, Birmingham, 64, denied the charges. Beadle was found not guilty of two counts, Evans of six and Prytherch of six.

Evans, Beadle, Prytherch, Fisher and Bolton will be sentenced at Wolverhampton Crown Court on March 10.

Not guilty verdicts were found in all counts faced by Richard Ledwith, 38, of West Heath, and Nadeem Yasin, 34, of Hodge Hill.

King Arthur is put to the sword



Going going... 1930s Dudley pub the King Arthur pictured midway through the demolition process

A LANDMARK at a gateway to Dudley has been demolished to make way for a supermarket.

The 1930s roadhouse King Arthur pub, next to the Birmingham New Road, has been knocked down to clear the site for a new Aldi store.

Residents have long been split over the fate of the locally-listed building, which closed down as a pub in 2012 and had become an eyesore after it became a target for vandals.

The future of the site was sealed by planning bosses last year after heritage groups had declined to come to its rescue.

Councillor Alan Finch, who has overseen the planning process, said: "It is sad to see the King Arthur pub go, but I think it's fantastic for the local community to have a new outlet to go to."

"There is nothing like this (supermarket) around the Castle and Priory area. We are looking at new jobs for the local people."

Supermarket giant Aldi stepped forward with plans to develop the site last year, creating 40 jobs.

Dudley North MP Ian Austin asked residents living near the pub whether they backed the supermarket plans. Out of more than 900 respondents, 80 per cent said yes.

But Sedgley Councillor and UKIP MEP Bill Etheridge raised a petition with 102 signatures calling for the pub to be retained.

The pub was built in 1939 by Dudley architects Webb and Gray.

Lawyers choose MND as charity

BLACK Country law firm George Green has chosen the Motor Neurone Disease Association as the charity it will raise funds for during 2016.

MND is the only national charity in England, Wales and Northern Ireland focused on MND care, research and campaigning. The disease affects up to 5,000 adults in the UK at any one time. It is a fatal progressive disease that affects the brain and spinal cord, attacking the nerves that control movement. The association funds research, as well as funding specialist equipment and support grants for people diagnosed with MND.

The law firm will be participating in various events to raise money for the charity including its own Walk to D'feet, a walk from the firm's office in Cradley Heath to its office in Wolverhampton.

Proposal for flats at care home site

A CARE home in Dudley will be turned into flats, under new proposals before planners.

The plan for Beech Tree House Care Home, in Himley Road, has been submitted to Dudley Council by developer Mohammed Ali.

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Sainsbury's looking to take over Argos chain

THREE Argos stores in Dudley borough could be closed and jobs lost as Sainsbury's looks to take over the retailer and relocate sites within supermarkets.

The shops on Dudley High Street, the Merry Hill centre and Halesowen's Cornbow centre are all under threat.

Sainsbury's made the revelations after it set out its case for a £1 billion-plus takeover of Home Retail Group, which incorporates both Argos and Homebase. The bid deadline is February 2.

In a presentation outlining its plans, Sainsbury's said it would look to shut a number of the 734 units in the Argos chain and bring them into its supermarkets as concessions.

Sources close to Sainsbury's believe between 150 and 200 Argos shops could be impacted and that places all 16 in the Black Country and Staffordshire under threat.

Dudley councillor Khurshid Ahmed said: "I hope these stores are not under threat because they seem to be doing well. Argos in Merry Hill is big and one of the major stores. Dudley is vibrant and my hope and wish is that it won't be under threat. The same for Halesowen."

Deputy leader, Councillor Judy Foster, added that she welcomed Sainsbury's bailing Argos out if it was in trouble but that she hoped they would opt to save the three local shops.

There are already 10 Argos concessions in the supermarket chain in the UK as part of a trial.

Injured passenger no longer critical

A MAN badly hurt when a van hit a tree in Dudley is no longer in a critical condition. Two men — the driver and front seat passenger — had to be cut free from the Ford Escort after the smash in Clee Road, which was closed for several hours following the accident at around 1.30pm on January 6.

Two back seat passengers, women aged 44 and 38, were also injured.

The 37-year-old driver is recovering in hospital, whilst a 35-year-old man was originally in a critical condition but was said to be improving.

Sergeant Paul Hughes said: "It is important that we piece together the events leading up to the collision."

Anyone with information should contact the Collision Investigation Unit on 101.

Main entrance at park to be closed

THE main entrance of a Stourbridge park will be closed this weekend while resurfacing work takes place.

The work is outside Mary Stevens Park in Heath Lane. Access is available via the Stanley Road entrance.



Holly Lodge Science College, seen on Tuesday morning after evacuation



Parents gather at Leasowes School, Halesowen after the bomb scare

Bomb scares probe after schools cleared

POLICE investigations are continuing this week, after four schools in the Black Country had to be evacuated after receiving bomb threats.

Calls were made to Oldbury Academy, Bristnall Hall Academy in Oldbury, Holly Lodge High School in Smethwick and Leasowes High School in Halesowen at around 9am on Tuesday, warning of an immediate threat.

Lessons were interrupted and pupils told to leave as quickly as possible as parents were contacted to come and collect their children.

Police have been trying to trace the caller behind the bomb threats, which have been confirmed as hoaxes.

Police descended on the four schools within minutes and an investigation was launched to try to determine whether the threat was credible as hundreds of children spilled onto the streets.

The schools were searched but no suspicious packages were found.

There was panic and confusion among parents outside the school gates following the evacuations, with many only informed initially that they needed to collect their children.

Alerted

Leasowes High School took the decision to reopen on Tuesday afternoon after it was confirmed pupils were not in any danger.

Sandwell Council leader Darren Cooper said: "Three Sandwell secondary schools received bomb threats and the police were immediately alerted.

"To ensure the safety of pupils, headteachers at the schools made the decision to evacuate and pupils were sent home for the day. There was no suggestion of any threat to other schools."

Patricia Woodhouse, aged 52, was told to come and collect son Kieran from the Oldbury Academy. She said: "It's really scary knowing your son has come to school and there has been a bomb scare.

"It's terrible. You don't know if your children are safe or not."

West Midlands Police spokesman Billy Corrigan said: "Some institutions took the independent decision to evacuate students. All are safe and being cared for as usual by staff.

"The calls were received between around 9am and 9.30am.

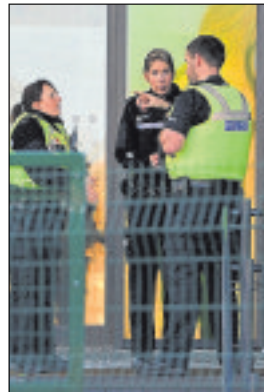
"A police investigation is now underway to find the person responsible for the calls."



Police are seen outside the entrance at Oldbury Academy following the hoax call threatening danger



Police in attendance at Bristnall Hall Academy, in Oldbury after the school was evacuated on Tuesday following the bomb scare



Officers in attendance following their call out to Oldbury Academy

College hosts open day at campus

HALESOWEN College will be opening its doors again this Saturday for prospective students to find out more about its facilities and extensive range of courses on offer.

The college's Whittingham Road Campus will be open from 10am until 2pm. Visitors will be able to see and learn more about the different courses available, how students can progress and the university options open to all.

The newly-built University Centre provides further learning resources for 19-plus students undertaking High Education and Access programmes.

Volunteer drive for zoo project

MORE volunteers are needed to get involved with the Tecton Experience project at Dudley Zoo.

It follows the restoration of four of the historic concrete structures in a Heritage Lottery Fund scheme.

People of all ages are needed to get involved and volunteers will get free entry to the zoo. To find out more contact 0844 474 2272.

The zoo, which opened in 1937, has the world's largest collection of the modernist buildings from the architecture group Tecton, which had a major impact on 20th century design.

Have butchers at apprentices

A BUTCHER has joined forces with Dudley College to enrol apprentices on a new 'Trailblazer' course.

Walter Smith Fine Foods became the first employer to register three of its apprentices on the Butchery Trailblazer apprenticeship programme, approved by the Government. It is the first Trailblazer to be delivered by Dudley College.

To find out more contact Sanjeev Ohri on (01384) 363 335 or email sanjeev.ohri@dudleycol.ac.uk

Bowie tribute raising cash for cancer charity

GLAM rock tribute band the Major Toms will be celebrating the music of David Bowie with a special charity gig at Kings Heath pub the Hare and Hounds on Saturday night.

The band, which features several veterans of the Birmingham and Black Country music scene, will be performing the Ziggy Stardust album in full and then several of the late rock icon's most popular songs. Doors open at 7.30pm and admission is £10 on the door for Macmillan Cancer Support.

App-y day at Merry Hill

THE owner of the Merry Hill shopping centre has launched a new app to help shoppers. Intu Properties' intu app has details of all its shopping centres including intu Merry Hill. It offers maps, directions to individual stores and details of deals and offers available from them and Intu itself.



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THE BEST OF PETER RHODES



BACK in the days of churchgoing, assemblies, sing-songs in the pub and sea shanties around the school piano, we learned how to hold a tune in our heads. The Brits could sing. This week, in the massive media overkill that marked David Bowie's passing, some TV and radio reporters invited members of the public to sing their favourite Bowie hits. And what a dire, off-key caterwauling ensued. What a tuneless nation we have become.

A READER points out that although the entertaining Dickensian (BBC1) is set in the deep mid-winter with snow crunching under foot, no-one has frosted breath.

A SURVEY of grass-roots Labour supporters reveals the party has grown, moved to the Left and thinks its new leader is great. I'm not sure if this tells us anything except that Jeremy Corbyn has a lot of support – among his supporters.



A READER tells me he phoned his local radio station to be told he was the first caller of the day and thus qualified for the mystery grand prize, if he could answer one simple maths question. By chance, he has a degree in mathematics. The prize was two front-row seats at a Justin Bieber concert. The crucial question – what is two plus two? Without a moment's hesitation he replied: "Potato." I'm not sure I believe a word of it, but I never entirely dismiss the conspiracy theory that the chief purpose of local radio is to rot the nation's brains.

WHY do some doctors have such a downer on booze? One suggestion this week came from health writer Tony Edwards. He says some research suggests moderate drinkers are less likely to suffer from a wide range of diseases. But as he puts it: "The job of doctors is to help sick people rather than healthy ones, so they inevitably see the casualties of alcohol, never its beneficiaries." So most doctors will see alcoholics dying of liver disease while never meeting the moderate drinker who enjoys a glass of wine a day and, inexplicably, never catches a cold.

Don't miss Peter Rhodes every Monday to Friday in your Express & Star

Bid to raise council tax is branded 'ridiculous'

DUDLEY Council has been accused of 'sleepwalking off a financial cliff edge' after plans to raise council tax by 3.99 per cent for three successive years were revealed.

The cash-strapped authority unveiled proposals to help slash a black hole in its funding from £50 million to just under £21m.

Opposition councillors have criticised the Labour-run council, saying the budget plans fail to fix underlying problems. But council bosses said the authority was facing difficult decisions due to a reduction in Government funding.

Conservative leader Councillor Patrick Harley said: "We would support one council tax increase this year as we've had five years with no increase. But I think it's ridiculous to propose to do this for three years.

Reality

"This council has refused to deal with the reality that local government needs to change. They're sleepwalking off a financial cliff edge."

Last week the council revealed plans to increase its share of council tax by 1.99 per cent and take up a Government offer to increase it by a further two per cent for adult social care, adding up to 3.99 per cent. This works out to be an extra 77p per week, or £40.04 per year, for those in Band C properties.

Council chiefs said residents would continue to pay the lowest council tax rates

By David Cosgrove

in the region. But UKIP's Councillor Paul Brothwood said: "It's a lot of money to ask residents to pay, and the big problem is it hits people on the lowest incomes the most."

Now the leader of Dudley Council is to ask taxpayers for their views – by getting on the bus. Councillor Pete Lowe will be travelling around the borough on public transport on Wednesday, January 27, speaking to passengers about services.

Meanwhile, an increase of nearly four per cent in council tax will come into force in Sandwell after the rise was unanimously backed.

Most households will see an increase of about £1 per week after Sandwell Council's budget was approved. Finance boss Councillor Steve Eling said the council, which had frozen its tax for the last five years, had been left with no choice but to increase rates by 3.99 per cent following the Government's removal of its grant.

Steve kitted out for his book



Fan Steve Plant creating a book about the Wolves kit

A DIE-HARD Wolves fan from Stourbridge has set about documenting the history of the club's iconic shirts from 1877 to the present day.

Steve Plant, aged 54, started collecting Wolves shirts to show his father John after the latter was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer and given just months to live by doctors. Seven years later he owns more than 300 shirts including those worn by club legends such as Steve Bull.

The collection is so large in fact he needed to have the loft of his Wordsley home reinforced after cracks appeared because of their accumulated weight.

He has now set about photographing a total of 106 shirts, including some from the club's museum, to feature in his book *They Wore The Shirt*, to be published later this year in a limited edition of 2,000 copies.

Steve, 54, said: "The Old Gold and Black is an iconic sports shirt. Everyone knows it around the entire world."

In his collection Steve can boast the shirt worn by Roy Swinbourne in the famous victory over Honved in 1954.

Shock over attacks on staff in schools

TEACHERS in schools across the Black Country are increasingly finding they are having to fend off attacks from pupils in the classroom, after 105 incidents in a six-month period.

Allegations of kicking, punching, spitting, hair pulling, butting, biting and scratching make up a total of 700 assaults reported at schools in Wolverhampton, Walsall and Sandwell over the past two years, according to a Freedom of Information request.

Students have found themselves suspended and their behaviour monitored as a result.

In Sandwell the physical and aggressive attacks took place across secondary and primary schools from May to November last year.

Serious

Council bosses said it was a 'very serious matter' and everyone needed to work together to prevent such incidents continuing.

Councillor Simon Hackett, cabinet member for children's services, said: "We have 55,000 children in our schools, so these figures show that acts of violence and aggression against school staff are extremely rare.

"However, when they do occur, we take them very seriously. We strongly encourage schools to report incidents, so that behaviour can be managed and staff can be supported."

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Sisters, aged two and seven, hurt in same day dog attacks

A TWO-YEAR-OLD girl and her sister were attacked by a dog, suffering injuries within hours of each other, a court heard.

The girls were both bitten by the Akita/Husky crossbreed, one of two dogs owner Susan Russon handed over to police following the incidents. Russon, aged 32, of The Beck, Netherton, pleaded guilty to being in charge of a dog allowing it to be dangerously out of control and causing injury.

Wolverhampton Crown Court heard that the girls, whose mother is a friend of Russon, had been fussed the dog when it turned nasty.

Country star on way to sing at city venue

GRAMMY award-winning country singer Patty Griffin is in concert at Birmingham Glee Club on Sunday.

The Texas-based songstress won the Grammy for her 2010 album *Downtown Church* and her most recent album, *Servant of Love*, was released last year.

Griffin, who has a nine album back catalogue, was also featured on Robert Plant's *Band of Joy* album and toured with the former Led Zeppelin singer. Support at the Arcadian centre venue comes from Mississippi-born Frankie Lee. Tickets cost £20. Doors open 7pm.

There is more country music at the same venue on Wednesday, January 27, with Texan singer-songwriter Aaron Watson, who last year released his 12th album *The Underdog*. He will be joined by California-based Sam Outlaw who has just released his debut album *Angeleno*. Tickets cost £15. See the club's website for details.

Defence barrister Stephen Hamblett told the court about the incident on July 2. He said: "Her friend has two young daughters and they were all at her house. One of the dogs attacked her two-year-old, and she had two small cuts. She was taken to hospital at around 2pm.

"They returned later that day at 6pm. Her other daughter, who was seven at the time, was fussed the dog, as children do. The dog then bit her. She sustained two cuts on her chin. She didn't go to hospital."

Judge James Burbidge was shown pictures of the injuries. The attack happened close to Russon's home.

Mr Hamblett told the court that Russon had handed over both dogs to police.

Judge Burbidge told Russon: "I take into account that you have pleaded guilty at the earliest opportunity.

"You had no reason to believe that the dog would attack in the way that it did in the first instance, although it could be argued you should have done more as a precaution to stop the second attack from happening.

"I understand that you are friends with the girls' mother and you have shown remorse. But you must be punished. I understand you must be a dog lover, so giving them up must have been very difficult for you."

He sentenced her to 70 hours community service.

Lucky couple win their wedding day



Going to the chapel — Natalie and Chris have won a wedding package worth £6,000

A COUPLE have been crowned winners of a Black Country win a wedding competition after receiving more than 25,000 votes from the public.

Natalie Davies, aged 30, of Pensnett, and Chris Williams, 27 of Wednesbury, beat three other finalists to win the white wedding package worth £6,000.

They will now start planning to get married in the historic and newly-renovated grade-II listed Lye and Wollescote Chapels, near Stourbridge, renamed the Thomas Robinson Building. The chapels have undergone a £1.2m restoration and will become the registration office for civil ceremonies.

Customer service advisor Natalie and warehouse worker Chris couldn't believe their luck after Mayor of Dudley Councillor Steve Waltho announced their names.

Natalie said: "I can't believe people of Dudley have voted for us, we are so grateful we can't really put it into words, I cannot thank everyone enough for voting for us."

On April 2 they will be driven in a 1933 Rolls Royce as part of the package, which also includes a wedding breakfast for 40 guests at The Copthorne Hotel, Brierley Hill, a makeover for the bride and wedding gown worth £1,000.

Free return tickets at winter zoo

VISITORS to Dudley Zoo in January and February will receive a free return trip.

Bosses say it will enable people to see the attraction at different times of the year.

Curator Richard Brown said: "The zoo changes so much during each season that we wanted to encourage visitors to come and see it for themselves.

"During the winter months it's much quieter on site, the trees are bare and those animals who are native to colder climates are more active — whereas during the height of summer the zoo is bustling, the gardens are blooming and different animals are enjoying the warmer weather."

The return ticket will be valid for six months from the visit date and an original receipt from the January or February visit will be needed.

Meanwhile, the zoo has revealed that more than 2,200 people filed into the Castle Hill attraction in the week between Christmas and New Year, which is almost 800 more than the same week in the previous year.

Attendance was at its highest on Monday, December 28, which was a bank holiday, and Tuesday, December 29 when more than 1,000 crammed into the zoo, which celebrates 80 years next year.

Rep's hit play is back by popular demand

OF Mice and Men is returning to Birmingham Repertory Theatre from February 4 to 13 by popular demand.

The play from the John Steinbeck novel is about farm workers in the US during the Great Depression. It was a success at the Centenary Square theatre in 2014 and returns with a new cast including William Rodell, Kristian Phillips and stage and TV veteran Dudley Sutton. Tickets from £13.50 on 0121 236 4455.

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IN MY VIEW

with Mark Andrews



Why less is more for the film goers

QUENTIN Tarantino's new movie, The Hateful Eight, seems to be the film of choice for those in the know at the moment. The western, set in the aftermath of the American Civil War, lasts a burn-numbing three hours seven minutes.

It follows hot on the heels of Spectre, the longest Bond movie ever, at two hours 40 minutes. And of course, a few years ago there was War Horse, another acclaimed movie that was also the best part of three hours.

Whatever happened to the 90-minute film? It wouldn't be so bad, but you now have to sit through half an hour of trailers, non-smoking warnings, and threats of what will happen if you film the movie on your phone, before you even begin. As if you could record a three-hour movie on your mobile.

Besides, too many films these days seem to be filled with padding just to make them last longer.

Take Captain Phillips, for example, the film about the captain of a ship hi-jacked by pirates. The first 15 minutes was about his drive to work and fears for his son's future. Or the Kingsman, where half an hour was spent messing about with a light aircraft. Just get on with it.

Look, I'm not pining for the days of a B-movie to act as the warm-up, an interval in the middle to change spools, and a spot of Pathe news to keep us abreast of what is going on in the world. But I do think that an hour-and-a-half is long enough for any story, and if a film runs for as long as an ice-hockey match, then it should be edited more tightly.

I TRUST that you are now sleeping more soundly at night, after our lawmakers spent two hours debating why they did not want to ban Donald Trump from entering the UK.

The debate, if you can call it that, given that nobody apart from Alex Salmond was in favour of a Trump ban, was triggered because 500,000 of the professional malcontents who spend most of their lives moaning on Twitter and Facebook had signed a petition. Do these people never take a day off?

There is the small matter of the fact that the talking Shredded Wheat has never indicated any plans to visit the UK – he would probably struggle to find it on a map – but, hey, let's not that get in the way of a spot of student-union grandstanding. But next time, maybe the Twitterati might turn their attention to something that actually affects us?

ACCORDING to the latest healthy eating guidelines from the Department of Health, we are now expected to restrict ourselves to 30g of sugar a day, the equivalent of nine sugar lumps.

Except Chris Huhne, of course. He's letting the missus have his points.



Thin White Duke — Bowie on stage at Stafford in 1978



Tin Machine saw Bowie fronting a hard rock band at the Civic Hall



Bowie at the NEC, he brought several tours to the mega-venue

Starman memories left by icon Bowie

David Bowie influenced more than one generation via his music, fashion, art and ideas
PETER MADELEY reports

IF it hadn't been for David Bowie, most of the rock stars, broadcasters and writers who made it out of the West Midlands would never have got started.

There would have been no Birmingham-based Duran Duran and no Black Country combo Pop Will Eat Itself.

Alternative music and new wave would have had as much chance of making it into the mainstream as avant garde jazz. The star who implored 'Let's Dance' was the starting point for three generations of artists.

His untimely death at the age of 69 robs us of one of music's greatest icons, a true innovator who ranks alongside The Beatles and Elvis as being one of the most influential artists of all time.

Influence

Pop Will Eat Itself founder Clint Mansell, for instance, is presently one of Hollywood's most influential soundtrack writers.

But without Bowie, he'd never have started. He counts Bowie as the main influence on his musical career.

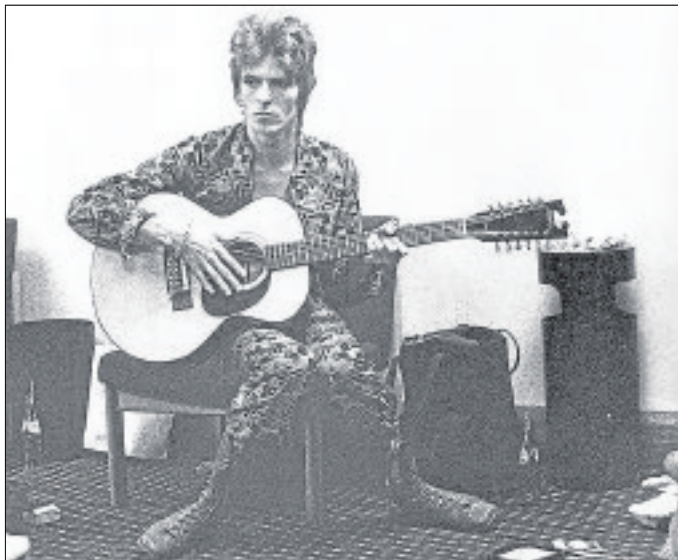
Clint, from Stourbridge, believes there have been 12 key moments in his life.

The first was his birth in 1963. The next significant episode was in 1972 when he saw David Bowie perform 'Starman' on Top of the Pops. The experience changed his life.

Clint's third key moment came that year when he bought his first album 'The Rise & Fall of Ziggy Stardust'. After that, he was only ever going to be a rock'n'roll star.

Jonn Penney, whose band Ned's Atomic Dustbin, followed Pop Will Eat Itself and The Wonder Stuff into the charts and onto the stages of the nation's biggest festivals, has a similar debt of gratitude to Bowie.

Jonn, from Wolverhampton, said: "To be



Ziggy played guitar — Bowie in a reflective moment backstage at Birmingham Town Hall

honest, I kinda feel unqualified to comment on Bowie," he said. "He's so iconic. He's such a genius. What can I say about him? I guess the thing about Bowie is what he stood for; whether that was intended or not. He was utterly unique.

"He made it okay for people to plough their own furrow, rather than follow the herd. He sort of ratified that, he justified it too. But beyond that, he showed everyone that the best music they can make is the most honest music."

Slade drummer Don Powell, who grew up in Bilston, said he was fortunate enough to meet

talented. The Let's Dance album to me is one of the greatest pop albums of all time, every bit as good as Sgt Pepper."

Mr Waterman, a veteran of 26 Bowie live concerts, added: "He was a showman who was able to wrap a simple pop song up into something completely different.

"He was just amazing. I only met him twice and found him incredibly quiet."

Wolverhampton author Caitlin Moran broke down in tears during a Bowie track on BBC Radio Two's Jeremy Vine show.

She said: "This is such a sad day. It feels like someone's taken the core out of the Earth."

"As a child of my generation he seemed to be everywhere."

Bowie played numerous iconic gigs around the Black Country, Birmingham and Staffordshire, including three nights at Stafford's Bingley Hall in June 1978.

Some recall him appearing at venues in Birmingham and Wolverhampton in the 1960s before he found fame, and support slots for Marc Bolan's band T Rex and Humble Pie, the group fronted by former Small Faces singer Steve Marriott.

He graced the stage at Wolverhampton's Civic Hall, firstly in 1973 on the Ziggy Stardust tour and later with his hard rock band Tin Machine in 1991.

He also performed at Birmingham Town Hall in 1970s and at the NEC during the 1980s and 90s.

Reality

In 1997 he was a surprise addition to the bill at the Phoenix Festival held at Long Marston Airfield near Stratford-upon-Avon and played a low-key gig at Birmingham city centre's Que Club.

He appeared finally in the Midlands as part of his A Reality Tour in 2003. That tour was cut short when Bowie had a heart attack, which began his withdrawal from concert performances. The singer's death was announced last Monday, just two days after the release of his 25th album Blackstar, when it was revealed that he had been battling cancer for 18 months.

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Keep those wandering moggies on a tether

HAVING read the recent reports of cats being poisoned or going missing, things may not be as bad as they seem.

About nine years ago, we had to have our cat put to sleep following a stroke. Because of our ages and general health, we decided on no more animals, as they would probably outlive us. However, this was not to be.

Soon after, a kitten roughly four months old, turned up on the front step. In spite of attempts to find the owner, nobody claimed her, so we had acquired another cat.

As we have always lived on main

roads, our cats have been on collar or harness with a longish length of rope so that they could be tethered and not wander.

About seven years ago, our neighbours moved but said that they could not take the cats, so we purchased a dog kennel for them to live in. Gradually they moved indoors. Nil to 3 cats, without trying. About 18 months ago, a black and white male cat arrived and took up residence in the kennel, until he too, moved indoors. Cats now 4.

Quite recently, a ginger and white male cat has turned up and decided

that this is home. We are also visited by two blue cats and a black one with a red collar. We have no idea to whom they belong, but they seem to think that we run a cats café.

We would love to know to whom they belong, or have they just been left when their owners moved. Much as we love animals the cost of feeding them is now more than feeding ourselves. Why do more people not tether their cats? This would negate the fear of them being poisoned or catnapped.

L HALES
Cradley Heath

Rotary Club thanks for charity help

ON behalf of the Rotary Club of Sedgley & Wombourne, we would like to thank everyone in the Sedgley and Wombourne areas who contributed so generously to our annual house-to-house collections during December. Also the patrons of Sainsbury's Wombourne, Ashwood Garden Centre and the Co-op in Sedgley.

We are delighted to be able to report that we raised a magnificent total of just over £5,000. This wonderful achievement enables us to continue our important work of supporting many local charities and donating £500 to the floods appeal.

The total amount collected by area shows that £816.82 was donated in our house-to-house collections in Sedgley, £1,093.64 in house-to-house collections in Wombourne with a further £3290.89 at static collections at Ashwood, Sedgley Co-op and Sainsbury's of Wombourne.

TERRY WOOD
President Elect

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

POST

Dudley Chronicle,
Chronicle Editorial,
51-53 Queen Street
Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES

EMAIL

dudley.chrons@
expressandstar.co.uk

Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

Moaning dog owners can like it or lump it

CAN someone explain to me why there has been so much coverage on this 'dog ban' at Himley Hall?

If dog owners don't like it they will just have to lump it - haven't they got better things to worry about?

I know that I have.

I laughed my socks off at a sorrowful photo of dog owners who will have to find other parts of the park to walk their dog, oh dear me what a shame. After all there are only about 200 acres or so, that's going to cause them a big problem isn't it!

Anyway, isn't 'dog ban' a huge exaggeration? When it really is just an area that is going to be 'dog free', and good news for a lot of the public I'm sure.

They even had the arrogance to think they should have been consulted! Who do they think they are?

Have the non-dog owners and those with children even been asked if they are happy about things?

Can I make a suggestion? If you are so bothered about your little darlings getting their exercise and being let off their leads - why don't you try your own back gardens then?

A BLAKE
Dudley

Floods — shame of the drains

FURTHER to the letter from P Cole (Chronicle Letters, January 7), It's simple — clear drains, I can only agree with his comments.

When you think of all the blood, sweat and tears that went into constructing these drains by hand without any mechanical equipment, just picks and shovels in Victorian times.

P Cole is correct in that not many years ago the drains were cleaned out every other week.

Now Bridgnorth Road in Wollaston is like a raging river after the lightest rain fall and all of the water collects at the bottom of the hill within the shopping area.

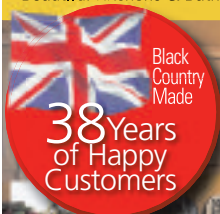
Dudley Council should be ashamed of themselves for letting this situation continue.

Come on Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council — get your finger out and do something about this.

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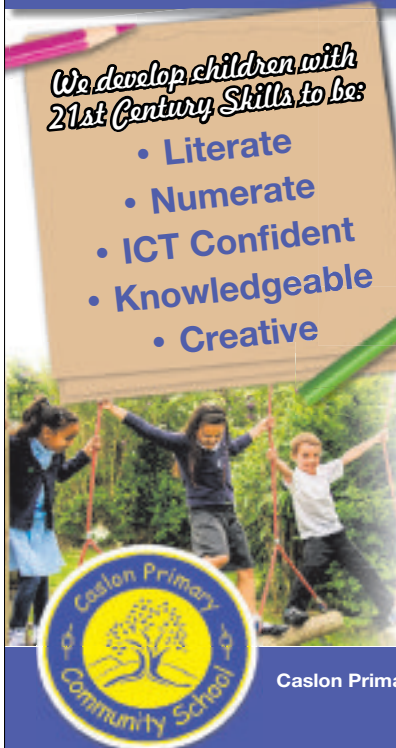




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Sweeping through the silence

Amblecote History

CHAIRMAN Pat Martin welcomed members to the final meeting of 2015 at the Ruskin Centre and the 12th Christmas party.

Pat then started off the 20 question quiz. Whilst teams conferred and wrote down their answers there was a general hush of concentration in the room until the loud exclamation of a shabby looking stranger broke the silence ... "where's my son, have you seen my son?" resounded around the room.

On closer inspection, the man could be identified as Stan Hawthorne the Amblecote chimney sweep who had been engaged to provide some light entertainment.

Stan had been sweeping chimneys for 42 years and he went on to tell amusing anecdotal tales of his experience, including how he had found quite a few things from dead ducks to trapped pigeons and more seasonally a letter to Santa from a young boy, Jonathon, who wanted a new bike and a book for Christmas - the well preserved letter was passed around the audience.

Pat thanked Stan, presenting an Amblecote History Society certificate as a formal record of his presentation.

She then made a presentation to Joyce Robins who was retiring from her position of treasurer, the Society bestowing upon her Lifetime Honorary Membership.

The prize for the winning photograph in the recently announced competition was in her absence awarded to Joan Kendrick.

Lodge confirmed as permanent home



**Speaker Clive Garner, treasurer Sandra Chappell and Chairman, Mary Jones
Dudley South Ladies Luncheon Club**

THE first new year luncheon, on Friday January 8, was chaired by Mary Jones who wished 31 members a happy and healthy 2016, welcoming back long-standing member Pat Chance after a long absence.

The chairman was also pleased to confirm that The Lodge, Wellington Road, Dudley would now be the club's permanent home and thanked the directors and general manager for making them so welcome.

The three-course meal and service was excellent and so was speaker Clive Garner who demonstrated the art of silk painting.

He explained the preparation and processes needed before painting, how to apply it and even how to cover up any mistakes.

He had brought along a selection of items already completed if members wished to purchase them.

Ann Rogers was looking into the possibility of a visit to Himley Hall for a tour and afternoon tea and asked for help in finding parking for future coach outings.

The AGM is on Friday, February 12 and by speaker, by popular request will be John Sperry, on local characters.

In March the speaker will be local historian Chris Smith.

Moseley Old Hall talk topic

Wollaston E TWG

neighbouring guilds such as Kingswinford, Norton, Oldswinford, Grange and Federation.

The evening concluded with a raffle. The occasion was considered a success, and thanks on behalf of the visitors was given by Jean

Williams of Federation. The guild's choir performed carols at services at St Thomas' Church, Stourbridge, and at Cobden Street Methodist Church, Wollaston. Both occasions were well attended.

Meetings are at St James' Church Hall, Wollaston.

January began with Malcolm Astley giving a talk on Moseley Old Hall.

Lapal Primary School

The Federation of Lapal Primary School and Lutley Primary School

Executive Headteacher: Mrs Jeannette Mackinney

Lutley Primary School

'Learning Together, Successful Forever'

Lapal is a slightly larger than average sized primary school situated in a quiet residential area, near the edge of Halesowen. We are lucky to have a lovely school building, nestled in superb grounds which incorporate a large field, several woodland and wildlife areas, a trim trail and a pond. We enjoy a supportive partnership with Lutley Primary School and form part of the National Teaching School alliance.

We work hard to develop the personal and social skills of our children, rooted in mutual respect and high expectations. Our academic standards are very good, supporting our expectation that all pupils are encouraged to do their very best.

- Outcomes at the end of EYFS, KS1 and KS2 are above national expectations
- The school was one of the top 10 schools in the 2015 Dudley Primary School league tables

In order for our pupils to achieve these outcomes we offer:

- A well-organized and modern indoor and outdoor environment that provides interest and excitement for our children, promoting investigation and independence across all areas of learning.
- A rich curriculum that ensures our children make good progress and achieve outcomes that are above national expectations
- A strong home school partnership with an effective open-door policy, including opportunities for families to come in to school and work alongside their children

We enjoy showing families around our school to see teaching and learning in action. To fully appreciate what our school has to offer your child please call our school office on 01384 818200 to organise a visit - We look forward to meeting you.

Mrs Joanna Turner - Head of School Lapal Website - www.lapal.dudley.sch.uk

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Lutley is a larger than average 'Outstanding' Primary School. Acquiring the designation as a 'National Support School' and the only Primary 'National Teaching School' in Dudley, it has been recognised that we have a relentless focus on high standards, excellent facilities, and great teachers, giving each child the very best possible start to their school life within a happy and secure environment. Alongside this we have a forest school, within our award winning school grounds, and children have the opportunity use our purpose built cob houses as outdoor classrooms.

At Lutley the pupils, staff and parents work extremely hard and the results of this are demonstrated year after year in the outcomes the children achieve.

- At the end of the Early Years phase (age 5) our dedicated team ensure the children achieve well above the Dudley average which prepares the children for the next stage of their education.
- At the end of each key stage, at ages 7 and 11, we also achieve well above national averages in reading, writing and maths. We have a pastoral system that gives outstanding care to our children ensuring that every child's social and emotional needs are well met. At Lutley children have the opportunity to take part in a wide variety of extra-curricular and leadership opportunities in a variety of subjects. These opportunities ensure that each child develops vital skills for the future world of work, and learns how to be the very best that they can be as a global citizen.

Of course, to appreciate the full extent of what we can offer your child, we encourage you to come and meet us and experience our happy, hard-working and thriving community. Please contact us on 01384 818220 to arrange a visit. I look forward to meeting you.

Mrs Rebecca Cox - Headteacher of Lutley Website - www.lutley.dudley.sch.uk

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Geological gems are in bid for global status



Once a coral reef in a tropical sea, Wren's Nest is an important geological site due to its huge range of fossils

A BID has been made to have the Black Country's hidden geological gems officially recognised worldwide.

If successful, the Black Country will be granted Global Geopark status and join a network of places of natural beauty, encompassing countries as diverse as Australia, Brazil, China, Austria, Malaysia and Italy.

The Black Country's application has now been submitted to United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation.

Two sites highlighted in the bid include Dudley's Wren's Nest National Nature Reserve, where the cliffs are covered in vertical ripple beds which once lay under the sea, and is home to 700 different fossils — 86 of which cannot be found anywhere else in the world.

Armada

Another example is Barr Beacon Local Nature Reserve, one of the original beacon sites that warned off the approaching Spanish fleet the Armada, when England was threatened with invasion by Catholic Spain in the Elizabethan era.

Barr Beacon has a quarry that provided much of the sand and gravel that built Birmingham and is scarred by a deep valley created at the end of the last Ice Age, 20,000 years ago.

There are 109 Global Geoparks in the world, ranging from Torbay and the Scottish Highlands in the UK, to volcanic sites in Iceland and Japan.

Council chiefs say it will boost the local economy and will provide a host of new opportunities for learning.

A scrutiny visit from UNESCO and the Global Geopark Network is expected during spring or summer and the final outcome of the application will be announced in the autumn.

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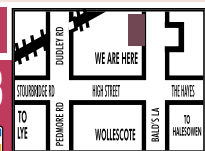
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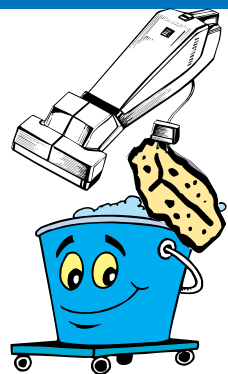
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Down-to-Earth views of an urbane spaceman

LEON BURAKOWSKI reports on a lecture by guitar-playing astronaut Colonel Chris Hadfield

CANADIAN astronaut Colonel Chris Hadfield gave space enthusiasts an insight into what it's like to leave the planet and live in orbit during a talk at Symphony Hall, Birmingham, on Tuesday.

He also revealed that rock icon David Bowie had told him of his delight that the guitar-playing spaceman had performed his classic song Space Oddity on the International Space Station (ISS) — an internet sensation that has now been watched 30 million times.

Now a great communicator for the space industry, Colonel Hadfield was inspired to aim towards the stars by watching the moon landings as a child.

At the time Canada didn't even have a space programme but that didn't stop him building a career in the military and aviation that sent him ever upwards towards that apparently impossible goal.

He went on to be Canada's first astronaut and spent 166 days in space. He flew on the Space Shuttle to Russian space station Mir and to the ISS. Then on the cramped Russian Soyuz capsule for his most famous and longest stint in space, nearly half a year aboard the ISS when he served as commander.

Under the banner The Sky Is Not The Limit, the former fighter pilot gave an inspiring talk about the qualities required to achieve goals,



Astronaut Chris Hadfield shared his out-of-this-world experiences

which can be summed up as: perseverance, preparation and competence.

He also revealed fascinating facts about his literally out-of-this-world experiences and how they have changed his perspective on life, that he no longer looks at the world as 'them and us' but just 'us'.

Illustrated with video and photos, the 59-year-old gave an enthralling account of what it is like to take off sitting atop what is basically a giant bomb, then flung from gravity's grasp by the 80 million horsepower needed to send the space shuttle into orbit.

He spoke with joy about the ex-

perience of weightlessness ('a toy that never winds down') and with awe of the time he briefly floated free in space during a spacewalk, when it was just him and the universe.

He also revealed that the astronaut's mantra is 'what is going to kill me next' during a regime of training, checking and rechecking systems and instruments.

He added with wry humour that sometimes Mission Control felt like a typical Help Desk, usually putting you on hold.

Once in space he did utter that famous phrase 'Houston we have a problem' after an ammonia leak

threatened to shut down the station and a spacewalk was organised in a fraction of the usual time to repair the leak.

He also told of how an apparently routine computer upgrade killed power on the ISS until the astronauts carried out a manual reboot. Astronauts have to be self-reliant.

During a question-and-answer session, Hadfield was asked if the crew of the ISS could relax and have a drink, to which he replied that in the dangerous environment of space every crew member is 'the designated driver'.

Aliens

He also revealed that reusable rockets could drive down the cost of space travel and lead to a new generation of satellites creating worldwide wi-fi, and his belief that mankind would return to the moon and create a lunar base.

On the inevitable 'aliens' question, he said the universe was so vast that the odds were most definitely in favour of life existing elsewhere, though close enough to interact with us was a different matter.

Returning to a theme about Birmingham as a city of invention, innovation and great engineering, he saw the sum of mankind's achievement leading to the ISS: "our test-bed for exploring the universe."

And, of course, the 90-minute Evening with Chris Hadfield, ended with his tribute to Bowie, strumming and singing Space Oddity... Planet Earth is blue, and he should know after orbiting it 16 times a day at 17,500mph.

Chris Hadfield shares his experiences and life lessons in the international best-selling book An Astronaut's Guide to Life on Earth.

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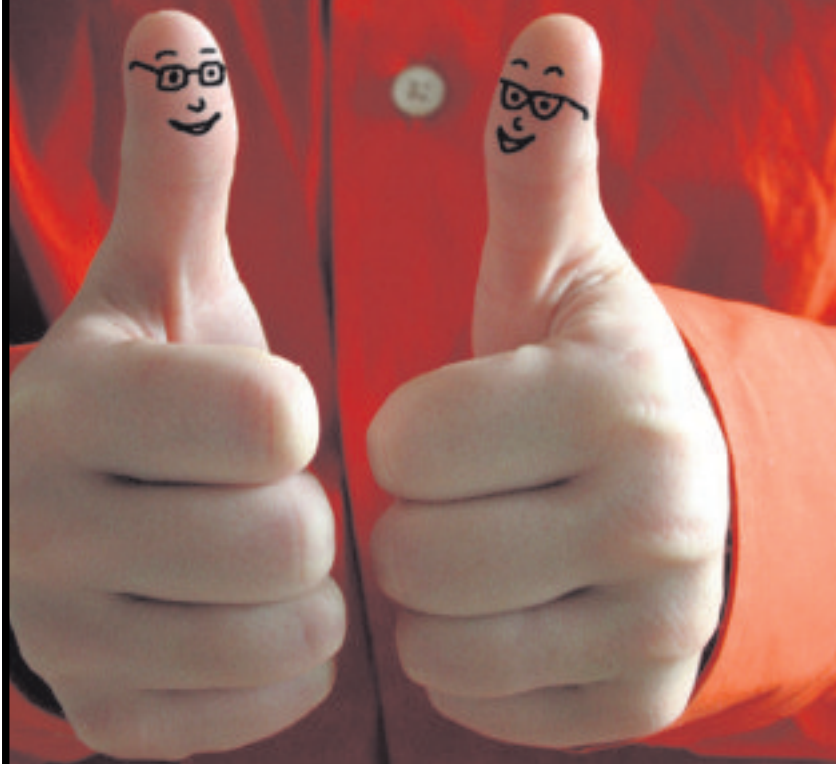
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Taylor leads the linesman onto the pitch for the 74 World Cup Final in Munich



Trying to keep control over German and Dutch players



Taylor awards a penalty to Holland in the first minute of the World Cup Final



Jack Taylor in action



Jack Taylor in later years

Taylor-made to be a success

WORLD Cup Final referee Jack Taylor has become the latest Wolverhampton legend to be immortalised with his own biography.

The late Mr Taylor took charge of the 1974 final between West Germany and Holland and is among 222 people making their debut in the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (ODNB).

He joins fellow famous Wulfrunians including Wolves and England defender Billy Wright, Wolves' most successful manager Stan Cullis and late Wolverhampton MP Enoch Powell in the list.

"It is a wonderful tribute," his widow Sue said. "I'm delighted that he is still remembered. He would be so honoured. Jack was a very modest man. "He had such phenomenal success yet it never went to his head. He thoroughly enjoyed what he did, and he knew he did it well."

Mr Taylor's entry in the ODNB opens by saying that he left school at 14 after failing his 11 plus.

"Living above his father's butcher's shop, it was probably assumed that he would go into the business, although as a young man he was keen on horses with thoughts of becoming a trader," the biography continues.

"In the event, he did work in the shop, but it was

MEMORY LANE

By Nick Humphreys

football at the weekends that became a central life interest."

The progress of Mr Taylor was 'extraordinary' according to the ODNB. He was only 31 years of age when he refereed the FA Amateur Cup final between Crook Town and Hounslow Town in 1962.

In 1966, he refereed the FA Cup final between Everton and Sheffield Wednesday at Wembley, and then took charge of the 1971 European Cup final, between Ajax and Panathinaikos.

Three years later he was the man in the middle for the World Cup Final, awarding two penalties.

He received the OBE for services to football in 1975. Not bad for the lad from Staveley Road.

Once when Mr Taylor refereed a match at Luton Town, his face was cut when a fan threw a penny at him.

Legend has it that after the match, comedian and Luton fan Eric Morecambe went to see him to make sure that he was alright, and also to check that he wasn't going to report Luton for the incident.

When Mr Taylor confirmed that he wouldn't be reporting the matter, Morecambe replied: "Good, now can I have my penny back?"

Mr Taylor later became commercial director at Wolves and was also a Wolverhampton magistrate for 25 years. He was inducted into the FIFA Hall of Fame in 1999 and in 2013 became the first referee inducted into the English Football Hall of Fame.

He was 82 when he died of pneumonia at his home at Shifnal in July 2012.

Former referee Alex Hamil met Mr Taylor in the late 1950s when he was a young up and coming referee in the Wolverhampton leagues.

"Jack was already a football league referee by then," said Mr Hamil, 80, from from Ettingshall Park. "He took me under his wing and was always there to offer help and support."

"Jack didn't have an enemy in the world. He was loved and respected wherever he went. He produced some wonderful pieces of refereeing. But even when he was at the very top he never forgot his roots. He was a proud Wolverhampton man."

Mr Hamil recalls an incident during a Football League Referees Alliance meeting that he says sums up his old friend. "One of the national newspapers wanted to run a contest to vote on the best referee in the country," he said.

"Jack stood up and said he was completely against it, arguing that we shouldn't start picking out referees as we were all in it together."

"Everyone was shocked because we all knew there would only have been one winner....Jack!"

"He didn't care about the personal accolades. That was his nature."

Wolves club historian John Hendley said Mr Taylor's latest honour was richly deserved.

"He was always renowned by the players as one of the best in the game," Mr Hartley said.

"If the players think you are the best then you must be pretty good, and it came from the best players in the world."

"In the World Cup Final that he refereed, he showed no fear in awarding the penalty in the first minute or booking the German captain. Both penalties he awarded were the right decisions."

"He also booked Johann Cruyff in that game. Cruyff didn't know that a Dutch linesman had taught Jack some Dutch swear words, so when Cruyff was swearing at him he knew exactly what he was saying."

"He was a very quiet man, a decent man. "Jack was respected by everyone in Wolverhampton and this award is fully deserved."

"He was in it for the love of the game, not the money. He loved the game and loved it to be played properly."

He added: "At Molineux, the referee's room is named the Jack Taylor Room. It gives visiting referees something to aspire to."

"If they could become half as good as Jack was, they wouldn't be a bad referee."

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Zoo chimps are not tired of monkeying around yet

IT'S fair to say the chimps at Dudley Zoo won't be getting 'tired' of their latest presents any time soon.

The playful primates have been given the old tyres off the attraction's land train to play with.

Dudley Zoo's popular locomotive, called Dotto, has been so popular with visitors over the busy festive period that it has needed a new set of tyres for 2016.

Rather than simply throwing the old tyres away, staff decided to send them to the chimp house where they knew they would be an instant hit.

The new tyres for the train have been fitted by Dudley Zoo's site service manager, Malcolm Clements.

He said: "The tyres we use on the train are stronger than your average car tyre, as it's quite a difficult path that it has to cope with, which is steep and bendy — not your average

course for a (land) train of this type.

"The tyres are bigger than average too, similar to tractor tyres, and can't be bought off the shelf, so we have to order them in locally."

He added: "We change them regularly so are always testing different compounds to find which type works best, but we've always got two sets on site at all times, just because they're not readily available."

The tyres will make ideal sturdy toys for the chimps, or could even provide a comfortable place for the chimps to snooze.

The zoo currently has seven chimpanzees on site and they are called Mandy, Fanny, Barbie, Malaika, Binti, Mali and Banika.

For more information on the Castle Hill zoo and its attractions, visit www.dudleyzoo.org.uk website.



Tyred out — one of Dudley Zoo's chimpanzees has a rest on an old tyre from the attraction's land train

£980k is spent on stubbing out habit

MORE than £980,000 has been spent in one year helping nearly two thousand smokers across Dudley kick the habit, figures show

Up to £520 was spent on each smoker aiming to quit in Dudley during the 12-month period.

In Dudley there were 1,887 successful quitters and the total spend was £980,345.

Health boss Councillor Rachel Harris said: "Smoking causes more preventable deaths than anything else and treating smoking related diseases is estimated to cost the NHS in Dudley £12.2m and the NHS nationally £2 billion each year.

"The Dudley Stop Smoking Service offers cost-effective, high-quality, evidence-based stop smoking interventions. These are delivered by specialist advisors who provide expert advice, support and encouragement to help local people stop smoking for good."

She added: "I'm proud of the success achieved by this service in Dudley. Supporting people to quit for good not only rapidly benefits their own health but also that of those around them."

Sex crime victims face a wait for counselling

VICTIMS of sexual violence are having to wait up to nine months to speak to a counsellor about their ordeal.

The number of victims referred to support services in the West Midlands has doubled to more than 5,000 a year since 2010.

The wait has been exposed by West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner David Jamieson who has vowed to slash waiting times in half.

Alethea Fuller, who oversees victim support at the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, said support services were struggling to cope with demand.

She said: "West Midlands data indicates that as a result of the increase in demand, specialist agencies are experiencing pressure on existing services as volume increases by up to a quarter in the last year.

Risk

"As victims come forward, good-quality, safe services are needed to act quickly and appropriately if they are not to be put at greater risk.

"The Independent Sexual Violence Advisor service offers support that is required, they can refer victims for counselling, assess needs and decide what type of support is required.

"The increasing demand on specialist sexual violence services has resulted in significantly longer waiting lists for counselling, currently between six to nine months for all specialist agencies across the region."

Mr Jamieson's office took over responsibility for victim support last April.

By Rob Gollidge

He has launched a Victims Commission to bring together experts to advise how to deliver services.

He said: "This year alone, I have allocated grants of more than £2 million to support thousands of victims across the West Midlands.

"One of the main priorities is supporting the victims of hidden crimes, such as domestic violence, child sexual exploitation, human trafficking, female genital mutilation and forced marriage."

"In these cases, we are often looking at the most vulnerable and isolated members of society and it is paramount that we bring these crimes out into the open. As a result of the work of the Victims Commission, I have been able to fund £320,000 to help tackle sexual violence here in the West Midlands this past year; £50,000 to fight Female Genital Mutilation and £110,000 to support the victims of so-called honour-based violence."

He was developing a Vulnerable Citizens Portal to identify those at risk.

Candle oil garage destroyed by fire

A GARAGE storing scented candle oils in Halesowen was destroyed when a fire broke out.

Fire crews from Oldbury and Haden Hill were called to the property in Hurst Green.

Six firefighters fought the flames for an hour and eventually put it out at 9.30pm on January 12.

Oldbury Fire Station tweeted that its fire crew had literally come out 'smelling of roses' after returning from the incident

Matthew Smith, spokesman for West Midlands Fire Service, said: "The garage, which was about six metres by eight metres, was completely destroyed by a fire.

"Six firefighters with breathing apparatus used two reel hoses and one main hose.

"The fire started when a naked flame spread to barrels containing candle oil, which was being stored in the garage."

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Follow the yellow brick road — to Netherton



Janet Kirkham, Bethan Siviter-Coupland and Melissa Huband are the three witches in The Wizard of Oz

THE annual pantomime from a youthful group of performers is set to be another smash hit.

The Young Ones and Their Guests are putting the finishing touches to their performance of The Wizard of Oz.

The group is made up of a talented

group of seven to 18-year-olds. The first performance will be at Netherton Arts Centre on Saturday.

Director and choreographer Audrey Hepwood, who has been involved with the group for 30 years, said: "Cinderella, Aladdin and Sleeping Beauty are all great fun, but we've done them all over the years. We were looking for something a bit different.

"That's why we decided on The Wizard of Oz."

The show starts this Saturday and runs until the following Saturday, January 30.

Evening performances start at 7.15pm with matinee shows on the weekend begin at 2.30pm.

For ticket details call Chris Sykes on (01884) 895266. Tickets cost £9 or £10.

Rockers swagger back with style

ALBUMS

by Leon Burakowski

THE classic bluesy rock on White Bear, the second album from The Temperance Movement, further establishes this British band as torch bearers for honest no-nonsense rock.

Their music is in the swaggering tradition of The Black Crowes and AC/DC with nods to the reflective West Coast style of the likes of Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young.

The band already have a reputation as a great live act and White Bear will add to their legion of fans, particularly thanks to full-throated Scottish frontman Phil Campbell.

They have already won The Rolling Stones' seal of approval, having been chosen to support the living legends on tour.

Highlights on White Bear include the stomping Three Bullets and the free-wheeling, expansive A Pleasant Peace I Feel.

Notorious

Check them out in concert at Birmingham's O2 Institute in Digbeth on Monday, January 25.

Notorious for unpleasant on-stage antics, it's a safe bet that **Fat White Family** aren't looking to become family favourites by name checking Killer GP Doctor Shipman, Italian dictator Mussolini and Hitler's henchman Joseph Goebbels with tracks on second album **Songs For Our Mothers**.

Their sound is so slippery it's hard to pin down, which isn't a bad thing. Safe to say, if you enjoy the loose grooves of The Happy Mondays and/or the intensity of John Lydon's PIL, this



Bear necessities — The Temperance Movement Picture by Rob Blackham

ramshackle bunch are certainly worth listening to.

I suspect that with a little more focus Songs For Our Mothers could have been an exceptional album. There are more than a few hints of that amid all the frazzled strangeness.

It begins with the relentless Krautrock rhythm of Whitest Boy On The Beach, takes it to another woozy level on Satisfied, and reaches its zenith with Duce — imagine some mad jam involving The Yardbirds, the Glitter Band and chanting Gregorian monks.

The delivery of lyrics range from whispers to screams with chants in between, and are mostly indistinct, which is perhaps a good thing given the band's desire to shock. But the cumulative effect is wonky, weird and overwhelming.

You can catch Fat White Family live

when they kick off their latest tour at Birmingham's O2 Institute on February 20 — don't say I didn't warn you.

Nearly three years on from the debut album by **Savages**, Silence Yourself, **Adore Life** finds the London-based black-clad female band perfecting their spiky goth/punk sound, which recalls the likes of Penetration and Siouxsie and the Banshees, with a theme that often returns to sexual politics.

Lead singer Jehny Beth has a stentorian tone but also reveals a more vulnerable side on Adore and Slowing Down The World.

But if you want pure punk attitude, it doesn't come much more withering than the put-down I Need Something New. When In Love is a stand-out track with its queering lyric and incendiary passion whilst Mechanics makes for a dark, apocalyptic closure.

More than 4,000 on bike courses

MORE than 4,000 people have taken bicycle training and maintenance courses since they were launched two years ago.

Organisers are now urging more people to get involved as part of a campaign to reduce congestion on the roads. It is part of a programme, run by Centro, part of the West Midlands Integrated Transport Authority.

The programme has already promoted cycling in the Black Country through the 'Bostin Bikes' scheme. This gave people the chance to try out new bikes with the option of buying them at a discount after training. Councillor Judith Rowley, lead for fair and safe transport on the West Midlands Transport Delivery Committee, said: "We've had a great response with cycling in this area. As well as the health benefits for people, there are real rewards in cutting traffic congestion and carbon emissions."

Find out more at www.mynetwork.org.uk/blackcountry and there will be flyers delivered to homes during February.

Terror for family as car 'petrol bombed'



Worried Rik Freeman, of Dudley, is moving his family out

TRUCK driver Rik Freeman is moving out of his home in Hill Road, Dudley, after his car was petrol bombed.

He said he had been targeted by yobs two years ago, who had slashed his and wife Tracey's tyres on several occasions. The incidents stopped after he installed CCTV cameras a year ago, until the the early hours of Saturday morning when his daughter Demi-Leigh was woken up by a flash. A hooded arsonist was seen on camera running away after the hatchback was set ablaze shortly before 3.30am.

Mr Freeman, 50, who described himself as a 'hard grafter' who gets on with everyone, said he had no idea why they were being targeted.

Anyone with information should call police on 101 or Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

Man took his own life after losing job

A MAN who was found dead in undergrowth at a park committed suicide after being made redundant from his job, an inquest heard. Russell Baker had been looking for work for around a month since losing his job as a machine operator last month.

Mr Baker, who was in his 50s, and lived in Spring Avenue, Rowley Regis, told his wife Paula that he was planning to hand deliver his CV to businesses when he left the house on January 5 this year. He was reported missing by his wife later that day with police officers conducting an extensive overnight search.

His body was found at Warren Hall Park a day later, on January 6, after police tracked the location of his mobile phone. A post-mortem carried out by pathologist Dr Suhail Muzaffar concluded that Mr Baker died from asphyxiation due to suicidal strangulation.

In an inquest at Smethwick Council House, senior coroner for the Black Country, Zafar Siddique, concluded that Mr Baker took his own life and gave a verdict of suicide. He said: "I would like to pass my heartfelt condolences onto the family and friends of Mr Russell Baker at this difficult time."

It's a relief that trouble pub is shut, say nearby residents

THE decision to close a pub in Dudley which has been plagued by violence has been welcomed.

Nearby business owners and residents have spoken after the The Earl of Dudley Arms, in Wellington Road, was shut down by police until the end of March.

The pub was closed by senior officers after police were called to the premises more than 60 times over the last two years, with the premises being described as a hotbed for serious crime involving gangs.

Incidents including wounding and

robbery were listed among crimes reported at the pub and in December a man was badly beaten, police said the owners had failed to protect customers by 'allowing members local gangs to frequent the premises'.

Dudley's Councillor Khurshid Ahmed said: "Public safety is of paramount importance and reading reports of what's been going on at the pub, it's fair to say I feel pleased it has been closed if such incidents are true."

"It is quite shocking people have been put at such risk and as a ward councillor, my main concern is the protection of their health and safety."

"We now have a three-month period

to work together to resolve this issue, but nothing should jeopardise the safety of the public."

A nearby business owner, who did not wish to be named, said: "It's been a big problem for everyone in this area and I feel the safety of local people has been put at risk. It's a relief that this notice has been served."

A resident of 20 years, who also did not want to be named, said she 'avoided the pub at all costs'.

The pub was shut down at the end of December and will remain closed until the end of March after a closure notice was granted at Wolverhampton Magistrates Court.



The Earl of Dudley Arms

MP's backing for governors

DUDLEY North MP Ian Austin has joined a group promoting the role of school governors in turning schools around.

The All-Party Parliamentary Group for Education Governance and Leadership aims to get more people involved in schools. Mr Austin wants education to be made the number one priority in the Black Country.

He said: "Getting people involved in their local schools as school governors is an important way of making schools accountable to local people and driving up standards."

"Local schools like Ellowes Hall, Dormston and Priory Primary are brilliant examples of how well schools can perform if governors, parents and the whole community get behind heads and teachers working hard to make improvements."

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Guide dog Natalie shows MP the way for charity



Dudley North MP Ian Austin takes a blind-folded walk in Dudley town centre with guide dog Natalie and team leader Andy Guiel

DUDLEY North MP Ian Austin took to the streets blind-folded to promote the work of the Beacon Centre for the Blind.

Mr Austin, who has joined a new Parliamentary group on sight loss, was led by Natalie the Labrador in a bid by the Sedgley-based charity to highlight the challenges blind and partially-sighted people face on a daily basis.

The Eye Health and Visual Impairment All-Party Parliamentary Group works to inform MPs about treatment and support for people suffering from

sight loss and blindness. The Dudley Labour MP has joined it to help promote the Beacon Centre for the Blind in Sedgley, which provides specialist services and support for people with visual impairment.

Mr Austin has previously backed campaigns by the national Guide Dogs for the charity to improve blind people's access to support and services.

Experience

He said: "It was an unbelievable experience. I think everybody should do this."

"You've got no idea what's around, what the obstacles are, where the traf-

fic is, if there's something outside the shop. It's indescribable."

"People involved in planning town centres should do this before they do the work."

He added: "The Beacon Centre for the Blind does brilliant work here in Dudley, so I will be working to promote them and speak up for local blind people."

Stourbridge MP Margot James also took part in a blind-folded walk to highlight the experiences a partially or fully blind person would have in a town. The Conservative MP said: "I was shocked at how different the experience made me feel."

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Credit union is to scrap its cash over the counter service

COUNCIL bosses have promised members of a credit union in Dudley they will still be able to access their money after its over-the-counter cash facility was scrapped.

Critics say the changes at the Castle and Crystal Credit Union in New Street will hit the poorest families in the borough hardest.

The facility, run by Dudley Council, provides saving accounts for members and allows them to borrow cash from others. Officials have reassured members they will still be able to access their savings despite no longer having the option to physically withdraw cash from the union building. The changes are due to come into force from April.

Councillor Rachel Harris, cabinet member for health and wellbeing, said: "Castle and Crystal is not closing. This is about a change to our cash withdrawal services. Members are still able to access their savings in many other ways and other services will continue to run as normal."

Wings and Wheels show is grounded

AN annual air show which raises thousands of pounds for charity is in jeopardy after bosses at Halfpenny Green Airport, near Stourbridge, pulled out of hosting the display.

Organisers of the Wings and Wheels shows – held at Easter and August bank holidays – have been left 'absolutely devastated' by the decision.

The shows raise money for air cadets, scouts and other charities, and help to fund Tettenthall Museum of Transport Trust, which now also faces an uncertain future.

Event organiser Vaughan Meers said: "I'm shocked and absolutely devastated by this decision. To pull out at this late stage, when it takes months to organise a show."

Around 5,000 people flocked to last year's two-day August event which featured The Red Arrows and raised £9,000 for charity. Mr Meers said they had been planning a special show this year to mark its 75th anniversary of the former wartime airfield.

Transfer

"There are a number of other ways in which members can access their money, including online and telephone banking or a BACS transfer to a nominated bank account."

"Alternatively people can purchase a prepaid card which enables them to withdraw cash from an ATM machine, can be used online or to get cash back, free of charge, from supermarkets."

Sedgley councillor Bill Etheridge has hit out at the prepaid debit card costing £3.50 with additional costs every time withdrawals are made at cash machines.

Councillor Etheridge said: "Some of these people rely on their last couple of pounds to get them through to their next payday or benefits payment."

"This is just one more inconvenience and cost for the poorest members of our society."

Pool dredged in park revamp project



The dredging of the pool at Mary Stevens Park in Stourbridge continues to make it more habitable for wildlife

IT'S a painstaking task but one that it is hoped will create a haven for wildlife at a popular park.

Workers have been dredging the pool at Mary Stevens Park, in Stourbridge, as part of a multi-million pound improvement project.

The scheme is one of a series being carried out at the park to return it to its former glory.

Fish were removed from the pool when work started last year. A heavy build up of silt had been affecting wildlife at the pool.

Old bikes, batteries, shopping trolleys and radios were among the items found in the pool by salvage teams as work got under way on clearing the pool.

A mechanical digger has now been positioned on a floating pontoon to allow it to float out into the pool to lift silt from beneath the water.

Dozens of fish were removed from the pool to allow the work to start.

Councillor Hilary Bills, who is in charge of environmental issues in the borough, is pleased with the work.

"The reason it is being done is because there was sludge stuck on the bottom of the pool," she said.

"Hopefully it will be a lot healthier once it is finished. All the fish were rescued at the time. They will be going back into the pool."

The £3 million park revamp has been made thanks to grants from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

A range of projects have already been carried out as part of the scheme which is expected to be completed this summer.

One thousand steel jobs are under threat

BLACK Country steel jobs could be at risk after Tata announced more than 1,000 roles will be axed as part of widespread cuts in its nationwide operation.

Around 750 jobs will go at the company's huge plant at Port Talbot, South Wales, but another 200 in 'support functions' also face the axe.

A Tata Steel spokesman said the firm could not rule out job cuts at the major Steelpark distribution centre at Wednesfield, where most of the company's 600 Black Country workers are employed. He said a 45-day consultation process being carried out nationwide would determine where jobs will be cut.

The Wednesfield site handles steel produced at Port Talbot, as does the company's smaller operation at Brierley Hill, which has a railroad directly linked to Tata's South Wales steel-making plants.

As well as the 750 Port Talbot roles and 200 support jobs, 100 positions are to be cut at steel mills in Llanwern, Trostre, Corby and Hartlepool.

Karl Koehler, chief executive of Tata Steel's European operations, said: "I know this news will be unsettling for all those affected, but these tough actions are critical in the face of extremely difficult market conditions which are expected to continue for the foreseeable future."

History group reveals the real War Horses

THE Real War Horse will be the subject of the next meeting of Wyre Forest Historical Research Group.

Robin Hill will be describing how, for the last time, the armies in the First World War relied on horse power and there was an equine call-up with an impact on every farm and estate.

The talk will take place at The Corn Exchange in Kidderminster Town Hall, at Vicar Street, on Thursday, January 28, from 2pm.

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Birmingham, B5 4DS.
Call 0844 871 3011

Seyes: Yes Experience
Sat at 7.30pm,
Prince Of Wales Centre,
Cannock, WS11 1DE.
Call 01543 578762

One Night Of Rock
Fri at 7.30pm,
New Alexandra Theatre,
Birmingham, B5 4DS.
Call 0844 871 3011

G2 Definitive Genesis: Genesis
Tribute
Sat at 9pm,
The Robin 2, Bilston,
WV14 7LJ.
Call 01902 401211

The Libertines
Wed at 6pm, £25.70 - £35.70
Barclaycard Arena,
Birmingham, B1 2AA.
Call 0121 780 4141

Eradikator
Sat at 6.45pm,
O2 Academy Birmingham,
B1 1DB.
Call 0121 622 8250

Open Mic Night
Mon at 8.30pm, Free
Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge,
DY8 3TB. Call 01384 374410

The Temperance Movement
Mon at 7pm, £14
The Institute, Digbeth,
Birmingham, B5 6DY.
Call 0121 643 0428

Battle of The Bands Heats
Fri, Sun, 7.30pm
Wolverhampton Slade Rooms,
WV1 1RQ. 0870 320 7000

FOLK &
ACOUSTIC

The Acoustic Sessions
Tue at 8.30pm, Free
The Jam House,
Birmingham, B31QU.
Call 0121 200 3030

Aaron Watson
Wed at 7pm - 11pm,
The Glee Club, Birmingham,
B5 4TD. Call 0871 472 0400

Patty Griffin
Sun at 7pm - 11pm,
The Glee Club, Birmingham,
B5 4TD.
Call 0871 472 0400

Irish Music Session
Wed at 8pm,
Katie Fitzgerald's,
Stourbridge, DY8 3TB.
Call 01384 374410

JAZZ & BLUES

Blues Club
Sat at 4pm - 8pm,
Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath,
Birmingham, B14 7JZ.
Call 0844 870 0000

Reuben James Jazz Trio
Fri at 8pm,
mac, Cannon Hill Road,
Birmingham, B12 9QH.
Call 0121 446 3232

Del Camino
Thu at 10pm, £0 - £5
The Jam House, Birmingham,
B31QU.
Call 0121 200 3030

Kenny Thomas
Wed at 8.30pm,
The Jam House, Birmingham,
B31QU.
Call 0121 200 3030

Sax In The City: The
Notebenders
Sat at 1.30pm,
Symphony Hall,
Birmingham, B1 2EA.
Call 0121 780 3333

Solid Soul
Fri at 9pm, Sat at 9pm,
£5 - £10
The Jam House, Birmingham,
B31QU. Call 0121 200 3030

The Story Of Ronnie Scott's
Sat at 8pm,
Birmingham Town Hall,
B3 3DQ. Call 0121 780 3333

Room 4 the Blues - Session
Fri, 8pm
The Claregate Pub,
Codsall Road, Wolverhampton,
WV6 9ED.

CLASSICAL &
OTHER MUSIC

The Lydia Granville Quartet
Fri at 5pm,
Symphony Hall,
Birmingham, B1 2EA.
Call 0121 780 3333

Singalong With The CBSO:
Haydn's The Creation
Sun at 1.30pm, 7pm, £13.50
Symphony Hall,
Birmingham, B1 2EA.
Call 0121 780 3333

CBSO 2015-16: Nicola
Benedetti: Szymanowski
Wed at 7.30pm, £12.50 - £45
Symphony Hall,
Birmingham, B1 2EA.
Call 0121 780 3333

KS3 Schools' Concerts
Fri at 11am, 1pm, £5
Symphony Hall,
Birmingham, B1 2EA.
Call 0121 780 3333

THEATRE

Strictly Come Dancing
Fri at 7.30pm, Sat at 2.30pm,
7.30pm, Sun at 1.30pm, 6.30pm,
£35 - £65
Barclaycard Arena,
Birmingham, B1 2AA.
Call 0121 780 4141

Freezin
Sat at 7.30pm,
The Crescent Theatre,
Birmingham, B16 8AE.
Call 0121 643 5858

ZooResidence Showcase:
Nursery Rhymes: Remixed
Wed at 2pm, 7pm,
Wolverhampton Grand Theatre,
WV1 1DE. 01902 573320

Entertaining Angels by Richard
Everett
Mon - Thu at 7.30pm
The Rose Theatre,
Kidderminster, DY10 2RX.
Call 01562 743745

The Boy Who Bit Picasso
Fri at 10am, 1.30pm, Sat at
2.30pm,
Newhampton Arts Centre,
Wolverhampton,
WV1 4AN. Call 01902 572090

A Beautiful Ending
Tue at 8pm - 10.20pm, Wed at
8pm - 10.20pm,
Birmingham Repertory Theatre,
B1 2EP. Call 0121 236 4455

Ballet Theatre UK: The Snow
Queen
Fri at 7.30pm, £12 - £17
The Crescent Theatre,
Birmingham,
B16 8AE. Call 0121 643 5858

Cabaret XXL 2016
Thu at 9.30pm,
Birmingham Repertory Theatre,
B1 2EP. Call 0121 236 4455

Death Of A Salesman
Fri at 7.45pm, Sun at 2.45pm,
7.45pm, Mon at 7.45pm, Wed at
7.45pm, Thu at 7.45pm,
The Crescent Theatre,
Birmingham, B16 8AE.
Call 0121 643 5858

The Legend Of King Arthur
Sun at 7.30pm, £10
Oakengates Theatre, Telford,
TF2 6EP. Call 01952 382382

The Great Gatsby
Thu at 7.30pm,
Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury,
SY3 8FT. Call 01743 281281

The Midnight Soup
Sat at 2pm, 8pm,
mac, Cannon Hill Road,
Birmingham, B12 9QH.
Call 0121 446 3232

The Rocky Horror Show
Mon at 8pm, Tue at 8pm, Wed at
8pm, Thu at 8pm,
New Alexandra Theatre,
Birmingham, B5 4DS.
Call 0844 871 3011

Lady Lust
Fri at 8pm - 10pm, Sat at 8pm -
10pm,
Birmingham Repertory Theatre,
B1 2EP. Call 0121 236 4455

Macbeth
Tue at 7pm, Wed at 7.30pm, Thu
at 2pm, 7.30pm,
£8.50 - £35
Birmingham Repertory Theatre,
B1 2EP. Call 0121 236 4455

Peter Pan
Fri at 2.30pm, 7.15pm, Sat at
2.30pm, 7.15pm, Sun at 2pm,
6pm, £17 - £31.50
Wolverhampton Grand Theatre,
WV1 1DE. Call 01902 573320

The Snowman
Fri at 2pm, 7pm, Sat at 11am,
3pm, 7pm, Sun at 3pm,
£13.50 - £35
Birmingham Repertory Theatre,
B1 2EP. Call 0121 236 4455

Aladdin
Sun at 5.15pm, Tue at 2pm,
7.15pm, Wed at 2pm, 7.15pm,
Thu at 12pm, 12pm, 7.15pm, £14
- £42
Birmingham Hippodrome,
B5 4TB. Call 0844 338 5000

COMEDY

Birmingham Is Funny: Foghorn
Unscripted - What The
Dickens?
Sat at 7.30pm,
mac, Cannon Hill Road,
Birmingham, B12 9QH.
Call 0121 446 3232

No Such Thing As A Fish With
The QI Elves: Live Tour
Sat at 8pm,
mac, Cannon Hill Road,
Birmingham, B12 9QH.
Call 0121 446 3232

Ivy Suttie: The Actual One
Tue at 8pm,
Wolverhampton Slade Rooms,
WV1 1RQ.
Call 0870 320 7000

The Best In Live Stand-Up
Comedy
Fri, Sat at 7pm,
The Glee Club, Birmingham,
B5 4TD. Call 0871 472 0400

Comedy In The Met
Sat at 8pm,
Stafford Gatehouse Theatre,
ST16 2LT.
Call 01785 254653

Dave Gorman: Gets Straight To
The Point (The PowerPoint)
Tue at 8pm, £24
Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury,
SY3 8FT.
Call 01743 281281

TALKS &
OTHER EVENTS

The REP And Innovation In
Theatre Design: Talk
Thu at 12pm, £4.50 - £12
Birmingham Repertory Theatre,
B1 2EP.
Call 0121 236 4455

Beta International 2016
Sun at 9.30am - 6pm, Mon at
9.30am - 6pm, Tue at 9.30am -
4.30pm,
The NEC Birmingham,
B40 1NT. Call 0121 780 4141

The Monster Energy
Arenacross Tour
Sat at 7pm, Sun at 3pm
Genting Arena,
Birmingham, B40 1NT.
Call 0121 780 4141

CLUBBING

Quadrophenia Night
Sat - Sun at 8pm - 1am,
O2 Academy Birmingham,
B1 1DB.
Call 0121 622 8250

EL-B
Fri - Sat at 10pm - 3am,
Hare & Hounds,
Kings Heath, Birmingham,
B14 7JZ.
Call 0844 870 0000

Check out full listings in **the ticket** in Friday's Express & Star

Return of Rocky's raunchy musical



Do the time warp again with those naughty s-extraterrestrials when The Rocky Horror Show arrives in Birmingham

SINCE its first appearance at London's Royal Court Theatre in June 1973, Richard O'Brien's The Rocky Horror Show has become the world's favourite rock 'n' roll musical.

It has been performed for over 40 years and has been translated into more than 20 languages, as well as becoming a cult movie.

Director Christopher Luscombe created a new production to celebrate

the 40th anniversary and this version of the show is back by popular demand, embarking on a year-long national tour including a stint at Birmingham's New Alexandra Theatre from Monday to Saturday.

X Factor finalist and chart-topper Diana Vickers will star in the role of Janet Weiss, opposite Emmerdale actor Ben Freeman as Brad Majors. S Club 7 star Paul Cattermole will join

them as rocker Eddie and Dr Scott. West End star Liam Tamne, who shot to fame on The Voice, has been cast as transsexual alien icon Frank N Furter.

Following over 900 performances of the 40th anniversary tour, Kristian Lavercombe returns as Riff Raff.

The musical extravaganza features classic songs including Science Fiction/Double Feature, Dammit Janet and, of course, The Time-Warp.



Double double toil and trouble

ACTORS John Heffernan and Anna Maxwell Martin will star as the most famous power couple in drama in an ambitious and highly physical new staging of Shakespeare's Macbeth, at Birmingham Repertory Theatre from Tuesday to Saturday.

Scottish nobleman Macbeth, inspired by the prophecy of three witches, embarks on a murderous journey of power, treachery and paranoia in his bid to gain the Scottish throne, encouraged by his ambitious wife.

Maxwell Martin (pictured left as Lady Macbeth) is a twice Bafta award winning actress, for Bleak House and Poppy Shakespeare, also known for Death Comes to Pemberley. She was most recently seen on TV screens in The Frankenstein Chronicles, Midwinter of the Spirit and the BBC's Christmas whodunnit And Then There Were None.

Luther

Heffernan, who plays Macbeth, is one of this country's leading stage actors with the National Theatre and the Royal Shakespeare Company. He has also recently been seen on screen in Dickensian and Luther.

The production has been directed by Carrie Cracknell and choreographer Lucy Guerin, who also collaborated on the National Theatre's acclaimed production of Medea.

The Rep will stage several Shakespeare plays this year, including Twelfth Night and King Lear, to mark the 400th anniversary of his death. See www.birmingham-rep.co.uk

Strictly fabulous as celebs keep dancing

THE Strictly Come Dancing Live Tour returns to Birmingham for a fab-ulous ninth year.

Leading the pack will be this year's Glitter Ball winner Jay McGuiness, from boyband The Wanted. He will be partnered again by professional Aliona Vilani, who has announced that she is quitting the BBC TV show.

Other celebrities booked in for the three-day Birmingham run from tomorrow (Fri) to Sunday are Georgia May Foote, Helen George, Frankie Bridge, Ainsley Harriott, Anita Rani, and Jake Wood. They will be joining the 2016 tour host Mel Giedroyc, together with judges Len Goodman, Craig Revel Horwood and Bruno Tonioli.

Picasso show for family audiences

AN INTERACTIVE theatre show that offers audience members a chance to make art is being staged in Wolverhampton.

The Boy Who Bit Picasso is at Newhampton Arts Centre, Dunkley Street, on Saturday at 2.30pm. There will be performances for schools the day before. The show by Untied Artists and Oxford Playhouse brings artist Antony Penrose's children's book to life and combines storytelling, music and art. It tells the true tale of how a young boy – Penrose himself – became friends with the great Spanish artist.

Tickets are £5 for adults and £4 children on 01902 572090.

Singer puts back tour to the autumn

REBECCA Ferguson has rescheduled her Lady Sings the Blues tour, postponing her Birmingham concert for nearly ten months.

The X Factor finalist, who was runner-up to Matt Cardle in 2010, won fans for her husky vocals and was due to perform at the Symphony Hall on January 23. The third album by the 29-year-old Liverpoolian features her versions of classic songs by jazz singer Billie Holiday. But the concert has now been moved to November 2.

Miss Ferguson said: "I have made the decision to change the dates for my tour and focus on getting the (new) album ready."

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CHOICE



Eva Kor

The Girl Who Forgave the Nazis

(Channel 4, 8pm)

In the summer of 2015 former Auschwitz clerk Oskar Groening – then aged 93 – was charged as an accessory to the murder of more than 300,000 Jews at the infamous death camp. During the subsequent trial, 81-year-old Auschwitz survivor Eva Kor was called to give her testimony on the medical experiments she endured at the hands of Josef Mengele. Finding herself face-to-face with a Nazi for the first time in more than 70 years, Eva chose to embrace Groening, publicly forgiving him despite the role he played in the deaths of most of her family. This documentary explores the impact of her decision to absolve Groening, who was ultimately sentenced to four years in prison.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. 10.00 Saturday Kitchen Live. **11.30** James Martin: Home Comforts. **12.00** BBC News: Weather. **12.10** Football Focus. **12.50** Saturday Sportsday. **1.00** Tennis: Australian Open. **2.00** Live International Bowls. The World Indoor Championships. **4.30** Final Score. **5.10** Now You See It. **5.40** BBC News. **5.50** Regional Programme.

6.00 Pointless Celebrities. Soap stars Joe Swash and John Altman, Nick Pickard and Ali Bastian, Victoria Bush and Zarah Abrahams, and Sharon Maughan and Tina Hobley take part in the unorthodox quiz show.

6.50 The Getaway Car. Brothers Mitz and Dee, husband-and-wife duo Charlie and Kate, best friends Chloe and Bethany, sisters Val and Babs and new couple Joseph and Karen tackle the Getaway Car circuit.

7.45 The Voice UK. The spinning-chair singing contest continues, as Paloma Faith, Boy George, Will.i.am and Ricky Wilson appraise the talents of another round of hopeful stars in the third of seven "blind auditions". This week, Waterloo Road actor Tom Milner seeks to impress the coaches as he takes to the stage, and Irene Alano-Rhodes, the former star of Miss Saigon, displays her vocal skills. Dubliner Lauren Lapsley-Browne hopes her unique voice will make an impact, and eccentric rocker Billy Black's performance sparks a conflict on the panel. Plus, Brooke Waddie, the daughter of former England footballer Brian Waddie, also takes to the stage.

9.05 Casualty. An office worker makes use of her stay in hospital to get her own back on her prankster colleague, and Noel mistakenly believes Big Mac saved him from a vicious mugger.

9.55 The National Lottery Live. Gabby Roslin presents as the all-important winning numbers are revealed.

10.05 BBC News. Weather. **10.25 Match of the Day.** Highlights of the latest Premier League games; National Lottery Update.

11.55 Film: Lara Croft: Tomb Raider – The Cradle of Life. (2003) Action adventure sequel.

1.45 Weather for the Week Ahead. **1.50** BBC News.

BBC2

6.05 Race to Super Bowl 50. (R) **6.55** Film: Animal Farm. (1954) **8.05** Film: Bye Bye Birdie. (1963) **9.55** Film: Race to Witch Mountain. (2009) **11.30** Island Stories. **12.00** James Martin: Home Comforts. (R) **12.45** James Martin: Home Comforts. (R) **1.30** Film: Day of the Evil Gun. (1968) Western, starring Glenn Ford. **3.00** Film: 4 for Texas. (1963) Comedy Western, starring Dean Martin and Frank Sinatra. **4.50** Flog It! (R) **5.50** Victorian Bakers. (R) **6.50** Dad's Army. Sergeant Wilson is appointed manager of the Eastgate branch of the bank. Comedy, starring John Le Mesurier. (R)

7.20 Film: War Horse. (2011) A farmer's son forms a close bond with a horse he trains, but is forced to give the animal up when it is sold to the British army during the First World War. The horse passes through various owners on both sides as he travels across the battlefields of France, while the boy refuses to give up on being reunited. Steven Spielberg's drama based on Michael Morpurgo's book, starring Jeremy Irvine.

9.35 QI XL. Panellists Julia Ziemiro, Matt Lucas and David Mitchell and Alan Davies compete, as Stephen Fry hosts an extended edition of the comedy quiz show. In this edition, the host meditates on matters medieval and macabre, and as usual, he poses questions that are so difficult, points are awarded for the answers he finds most interesting.

10.20 Insert Name Here. Jennifer Saunders, Romesh Ranganathan, Jessica Hynes and Suzannah Lipscomb join captains Richard Osman and Josh Widdicombe to answer questions about famous people who share a name. (R)

10.50 Live at the Apollo. Mock the Week host Dara O Briain compers an evening of stand-up at London's Hammersmith Apollo, performing himself and introducing routines by guests Zoe Lyons and Paul Chowdhry. (R)

11.35 International Bowls. The World Indoor Championships. Action from the semi-final matches in the Open Singles tournament, at the Potters Leisure Resort in Hopton-on-Sea, Norfolk.

12.35 Film: Walkabout. (1971) **2.15** Film: East of Sudan. (1964) **3.45** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Fort Boyard Ultimate Challenge. **6.25** Pat & Stan. (R) **6.35** Dino Dan. (R) **6.45** Dino Dan. (R) **7.00** Signed Stories: Share a Story. (R) **7.05** Sooty. (R) **7.15** Super 4. (R) **7.30** Scrambled!: Scrambled! **7.35** Scrambled!: Mr Bear: The Animated Series. (R) **7.50** Scrambled!: Horrid Henry. (R) **8.10** Scrambled!: Nerds & Monsters. **8.30** Scrambled!: Thunderbirds Are Go. **9.05** Scrambled!: The Tom & Jerry Show. (R) **9.25** ITV News. **9.30** Murder, She Wrote. (R) **10.20** The Jeremy Kyle Show USA. **11.15** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **12.15** ITV News: Weather. **12.20** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **1.25** Judge Rinder. (R) **2.25** Tipping Point. (R) **3.30** Doc Martin. (R) **4.30** The Martin Lewis Money Show. (R) **5.00** The Saturday Night Story. (R) **6.00** Regional Programme; Weather. **6.15** ITV News: Weather. **6.30** New You've Been Framed! More comical mishaps submitted for approval by viewers.

7.00 Ninja Warrior UK. Ben Shephard, Rochelle Humes and Chris Kamara host the final heat, as competitors from across the UK test their strength, speed and courage in the obstacle-course challenge.

8.00 Take Me Out. Paddy McGuinness invites four more men to try their hands at winning a date with one of his 30 single ladies. This time, the would-be suitors are James, a caravan salesman from Skegness, London-based fireman David, Milton Keynes plumber Sam and Al, an American car fanatic and musician. Each of the men enters the "love lift" in the hope of impressing 30 single women and winning a date – but must first get their lights on as a sign of approval. Plus, Paddy gives viewers a chance to catch up with last week's couples on the Isle of Fernandos.

9.15 The Jonathan Ross Show. US actor John Krasinski, actress and comedienne Catherine Tate and Scottish stand-up star Kevin Bridges join Jonathan in the studio, and Rudimental perform live.

10.15 ITV News: Weather.

10.30 Film: The Chronicles of Riddick. (2004) Sci-fi adventure sequel, with Vin Diesel.

12.35 Jackpot247. **3.00** Murder, She Wrote. (R) **3.50** ITV Nightscreen.

CHANNEL 4

6.15 How I Met Your Mother. (R) **6.40** The King of Queens. (R) **7.05** International Snowdon Race. **8.00** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.30** The Morning Line. **10.00** Frasier. (R) **10.30** Frasier. (R) **11.00** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **11.30** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **12.00** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **12.25** The Simpsons. (R) **12.55** The Simpsons. (R) **1.30** Channel 4 Racing. Live coverage from Ascot and Haydock Park. **4.00** Come Dine with Me. (R) **4.30** Come Dine with Me. (R) **5.00** Come Dine with Me. (R) **5.35** Come Dine with Me. (R)

6.05 Come Dine with Me. It is the final day of the competition in Llanelli and teaching assistant Ainsley wants to educate her guests, while serving up an authentic Russian-themed dinner party. (R)

6.30 Channel 4 News.

7.00 Great Canal Journeys. Timothy West and Prunella Scales go in search of the lost route between London and the sea, which has not been fully open for over 200 years and requires four different boats to traverse now. They leave the Thames at Teddington and travel through the Surrey and Sussex countryside before arriving at Guildford, and a canal-side theatre where they have both regularly performed. The final leg of the trip brings them to the River Arun before reaching the English Channel. (R)

8.00 The Girl Who Forgave the Nazis. Documentary investigating the wider impact of Holocaust survivor Eva Kor's decision to forgive Oskar Groening, the 93-year-old former Nazi who once worked as a clerk at Auschwitz.

9.00 Film: Oblivion. (2013) Premiere. A repairman is assigned to salvage the remaining resources from Earth, which has been left a devastated wasteland after a war with an alien race. He discovers a human survivor on the surface of the planet, an encounter that exposes secrets from the past that threaten the future of the human race. Sci-fi adventure, starring Tom Cruise and Morgan Freeman.

11.30 Film: Priest. (2011) Fantasy thriller, with Paul Bettany.

1.10 Hollyoaks. (R) **3.15** Undercover Boss Canada. (R) **4.05** Phil Spencer: Secret Agent. (R) **5.00** Deal or No Deal. (R) **5.50** How I Met Your Mother. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake! **8.55** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. (R) **9.30** The Saturday Show. **11.30** Police Interceptors. (R) **12.25** Police Interceptors. (R) **1.25** Police Interceptors. (R) **2.25** Pets Make You Laugh Out Loud. (R) **3.25** Dogs Make You Laugh Out Loud 2. (R) **4.20** Cats Make You Laugh Out Loud 2. (R) **5.20** 5 News Weekend. **5.25** Nightmare Tenants. Slum Landlords. (R) **6.20** Ice Road Truckers. Lisa and Todd venture onto a route that has not been used before, while a crash threatens to bring Alex's season to an end. (R)

7.05 World War II in Colour. This edition looks at Hitler's plans to push his forces into the Soviet Union, beginning with the launch of Operation Barbarossa in the summer of 1941. (R)

8.00 World War II Battlefield Recovery. A four-man team of excavation experts sets out to retrieve Second World War relics from the battlefields and war-zones of the Eastern Front, telling the stories of fallen soldiers by examining their remains.

9.00 The Championship: Football League Tonight. Kelly Cates and George Riley present extended highlights of the weekend's matches in the second tier of English football, including Queens Park Rangers v Wolverhampton Wanderers at Loftus Road, Birmingham City v Ipswich Town at St Andrew's, Brighton & Hove Albion v Huddersfield Town at the Amex Stadium and Leeds United v Bristol City at Elland Road.

10.00 Goal Rush: Football League Tonight. Kelly Cates and George Riley present all the goals from League One and League Two, where fixtures included Burton Albion v Shrewsbury Town and Bristol Rovers v Plymouth Argyle.

10.30 Celebrity Big Brother. Highlights of the famous housemates' past 24 hours under the all-seeing eye of Big Brother, as they try to get used to living alongside one another.

11.30 Lip Sync Battle UK: Rufus Hound v Jorgie Porter. Melanie Brown and Professor Green present the musical game show as comedian Rufus Hound and actress Jorgie Porter go head to head lip-synching to a hit song. (R)

12.00 SuperCasino. **3.10** Celebrity Big Brother. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Three
7.00 Don't Tell the Bride **8.00** Top Gear
9.05 Film: Looper (2012) **10.55** Russell Howard's Good News **11.25** Family Guy
1.35 Siblings **5.05** Film: Tropic Thunder (2008) **3.45** Glastonbury: The Udder Side **4.00** Close

BBC Four
7.00 Stories from the Dark Earth: Meet the Ancestors Revisited **8.00** Shipwrecks: Britain's Sunken History **9.00** The Young Montalbano **10.55** Music Moguls: Masters of Pop **11.55** Duets at the BBC **12.55** Danny Baker's Great Album Showdown **1.55** Top of the Pops **3.20** Sounds of the Eighties **3.50** Close

ITV2
11.05 Ninja Warrior UK **12.05** Celebrity Catchphrase **1.05** Scorpion **2.05** Film: Small Soldiers (1998) **4.20** Minion Madness **4.40** Film: Hotel Transylvania (2012) **6.25** Film: Jurassic Park III (2001) **8.15** Beowulf: Return to the Shieldlands **9.15** Take Me Out – The Gossip **10.15** Film: American Pie Presents: The Naked Mile (2006) **12.25** Film: Not Another Teen Movie (2001) **2.15** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **2.40** Teleshopping **5.40** ITV2 Nightscreen

ITV3
11.35 A Touch of Frost **1.50** The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes **4.00** Midsomer Murders **10.00** Agatha Christie's Marple **12.00** Marchlands **1.00** The Return of Sherlock Holmes **2.00** Man About the House **2.25** ITV3 Nightscreen **2.30** Teleshopping

ITV4
11.30 Storage Wars: Texas **1.25** Storage Wars **2.20** Film: The Sting (1973) **5.00** Film: Apache (1954) **6.50** Film: The Hanging Tree (1959) **9.00** Film: Last Man Standing (1996) **11.05** Film: The Kingdom (2007) **1.20** Inside Manchester City **2.15** Ax Men **3.00** Teleshopping

E4
11.30 The Goldbergs: At the Movies **2.00** Film: The Core (2003) **4.35** The Big Bang Theory **9.00** Film: This Means War (2012) **11.00** Gogglebox **12.50** Virtually Famous **1.40** The Inbetweeners **2.45** The IT Crowd **3.35** Charmed **4.15** Revenge **Film4**

11.00 Biggles (1986) **1.00** The Princess Diaries (2001) **3.15** The War of the Worlds (1953) **5.00** Parental Guidance (2012) **7.05** Napoleon Dynamite (2004) **8.55** Youth Interview Special **9.00** Red Eye (2005) **10.35** Mindscape (2013) **12.30** Blood and Chocolate (2007) **2.25** Oki's Movie (2010) **4.00** Close

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CHOICE



James May's Cars of the People (BBC2, 9pm)
New series. The former Top Gear presenter examines how the car industry in Germany and Japan blossomed following the Second World War, becoming manufacturing giants that far outstripped the Allied nations that had defeated them. He test drives some of the vehicles Germany and Japan produced during the post-war period, as well as an assortment of other classic cars, including E-Types and Mustangs. He also reveals the sad tale of the Austin Allegro, a vehicle that had a devastating impact on the British car industry.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **7.30** Match of the Day. (R) **9.00** The Andrew Marr Show. **10.00** The Big Questions. **11.00** Regional Programme. **12.15** Bargain Hunt. (R) **1.00** BBC News: Weather. **1.15** Homes Under the Hammer. (R) **2.15** Flog It! (R) **3.00** The Truth About Sugar. (R) **4.00** Regional Programme. **4.30** Songs of Praise. **5.05** BBC News. **5.20** Regional Programme. **5.30** Countryfile.
6.30 **Attenborough & the Giant Dinosaur.** The story of how more than 220 dinosaur bones were found in the Argentinian desert, which were found to have come from a previously undiscovered species, which is the largest land dwelling animal known to have existed. David Attenborough visits the archaeological dig and a laboratory where the remains are being cleaned and analysed with lead scientist Dr Diego Pol and evolutionary biologist Ben Garrod, and meets animators, model-makers, paleontologists and anatomy experts who are working to reconstruct what the 37 metre-long creature would have looked like.
7.30 **Still Open All Hours.** David Jason stars as Granville in this follow-up to Open All Hours, now running the shop with his son Leroy after inheriting the business from Arkwright.
8.00 **Call the Midwife.** Barbara faces the biggest test of her career. Nurse Crane learns to speak Spanish, and Sister Evangelina helps a woman with breastfeeding, leading to unforeseen consequences.
9.00 **War & Peace.** Natasha encounters temptation during Andrei's absence. Countess Rostova and Anna both try to find wealthy wives for their sons, and Pierre grows frustrated with married life.
10.00 BBC News.
10.20 Regional Programme.
10.30 **Match of the Day 2.** Mark Chapman reviews the day's two Premier League fixtures, which were Arsenal v Chelsea at the Emirates Stadium and Everton v Swansea City at Goodison Park.
11.30 **Film: Private Peaceful.** (2012) Premiera. Drama based on Michael Morpurgo's novel, starring Jack O'Connell.
1.05 Weather for the Week Ahead. **1.10** BBC News.

BBC2

6.30 The A to Z of TV Gardening. (R) **7.15** Monty Don's Italian Gardens. (R) **8.15** Countryfile. (R) **9.15** Saturday Kitchen Best Bites. **10.45** James Martin – Home Comforts at Christmas. (R) **11.30** James Martin: Home Comforts. (R) **12.15** MOTD2 Extra. **1.00** Tennis: Australian Open Highlights. **2.00** Live International Bowls. The World Indoor Championships. **5.15** Ski Sunday.
6.00 **Film: Real Steel.** (2011) In the future, boxing matches between eight-foot robots are one of the world's biggest sporting draws. A washed-up human prizefighter finds an abandoned android and sets about restoring it to become a potential champion, a project that reunites him with his estranged 11-year-old son. Sci-fi drama, starring Hugh Jackman, Dakota Goyo and Evangeline Lilly. Edited for daytime broadcast.
8.00 **Dragons' Den.** Evan Davis gives another group of would-be entrepreneurs the chance to impress panelists Deborah Meaden, Nick Jenkins, Peter Jones, Touker Suleyman and Sarah Willingham with their business ideas. Products featured in the show include a portable drum kit that does not need drums and an inflatable tanning tent.
9.00 **James May's Cars of the People.** New series. The former Top Gear presenter examines how the car industry in Germany and Japan blossomed following the Second World War, while Britain's own manufacturers struggled.
10.00 **Film: Blood Diamond.** (2006) Smuggler Danny Archer ends up in prison in war-torn Sierra Leone in 1999, where he meets Solomon, a Mendie fisherman separated from his family by guerrillas. Danny pledges to help the desperate man rescue his son, who has been forcibly conscripted as a child soldier, in return for a rare pink diamond that Solomon had hidden away before his capture. Action thriller, starring Leonardo DiCaprio, Djimon Hounsou and Jennifer Connelly.
12.10 **Film: Heist.** (2001) A thief is blackmailed into pulling off a robbery, and also suspects his wife is planning to leave him. David Mamet's thriller, with Gene Hackman, Danny DeVito and Rebecca Pidgeon. **1.55** Sign Zone: Countryfile. (R) **2.50** Holby City. (R) **3.50** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITY: Fort Boyard Ultimate Challenge. **6.25** Pat & Stan. (R) **6.35** Dino Dan. (R) **6.45** Dino Dan. (R) **7.00** Signed Stories: Share a Story. (R) **7.05** Sooty. (R) **7.15** Super 4. (R) **7.30** Scrambled!: Scrambled! **7.35** Scrambled!: Mr Bear: The Animated Series. (R) **7.50** Scrambled!: Horrid Henry. (R) **8.10** Scrambled!: Nerds & Monsters. **8.30** Scrambled!: Bear Grylls Survival School. **9.05** Scrambled!: The Tom & Jerry Show. (R) **9.25** ITV News. **9.30** Murder, She Wrote. (R) **10.25** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **11.30** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **12.30** ITV News: Weather. **12.40** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **1.40** River Monsters. (R) **2.10** Ninja Warrior UK. (R) **3.15** **Film: On Her Majesty's Secret Service.** (1969) James Bond adventure, starring George Lazenby.
6.00 **Regional Programme:** Weather.
6.15 **ITV News:** Weather.
6.30 **Planet's Got Talent.** New series. The best and worst clips from the global Got Talent franchise, featuring blindfolded sword-swallowing and a group of stuntmen crashing a bus.
7.00 **Beowulf: Return to the Shieldlands.** A new leader is to be chosen as Herot faces being torn apart by civil war between the tribes, leaving Rheda faced with the possibility of fighting to remain in power.
8.00 **Endeavour.** The detective is approached by a former mentor from his college days, who asks Morse to ensure the safety of his wife. However, the assignment leaves him contemplating his future with the police force. Meanwhile, a murder in the world of fashion stirs up old gangland conflicts in the city. Shaun Evans stars. Last in the series.
10.00 **ITV News:** Weather.
10.15 **The Day Hitler Died.** Documentary exploring the fuhrer's final hours in his Berlin bunker as Russian forces closed in, featuring previously unseen interviews with eyewitnesses, recorded in 1948.
11.15 **Perspectives: Bruce Forsyth on Sammy Davis Jr.** The veteran entertainer explores the life and work of the US singer, dancer and actor.
12.15 Jackpot247. **3.00** ITV Nightscreen. **5.05** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R)

CHANNEL 4

6.15 How I Met Your Mother. (R) **6.40** The King of Queens. (R) **7.05** The King of Queens. (R) **7.30** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **7.55** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.30** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **9.00** Frasier. (R) **9.30** Sunday Brunch. **12.30** George Clarke's Amazing Spaces. (R) **1.30** Location, Location, Location. (R) **2.35** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **3.00** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **3.30** The Simpsons. (R) **4.00** The Simpsons. (R) **4.30** Marvel's Agents of SHIELD. **5.30** Channel 4 News.
6.00 **Film: Night at the Museum: Battle of the Smithsonian.** (2009) The living exhibits at New York's Museum of Natural History are shipped to Washington's Smithsonian Institution – along with the artefact that brought them to life in the first place. Nightwatchman Larry tries to retrieve it, only to find the contents of the world's largest museum have been reanimated, including a pharaoh determined to take over the world. Fantasy comedy sequel, starring Ben Stiller.
8.00 **Walking the Himalayas.** Levison Wood and guide Binod Parivar face a 30-mile trek through the jungles of Eastern Nepal, with no roads and few people to tell them they are heading in the right direction. Their journey comes to an end in Bhutan, a country rarely visited by foreigners, where they visit a holy mountain, join the celebrations for the king's birthday, and listen to local children's tales of yeti. Last in the series.
9.00 **Deutschland 83.** The bug in Linda's desk is discovered, and Moritz is given two options – persuade the secretary to defect or kill her. Alex turns to Tschibier following an argument with his father.
10.08 **8 Out of 10 Cats Does Countdown.** Sean Lock and Rob Beckett compete against Jon Richardson and Carlad Lloyd in the comedy panel show, while Sam Simmons helps out in Dictionary Corner. (R)
11.05 **Film: 48 Hrs.** (1982) A hard-bitten cop temporarily releases a fast-talking criminal from prison to help him track down two escaped fugitives. Comedy thriller, starring Nick Nolte and Eddie Murphy.
12.50 Embarrassing Bodies: Back to the Clinic. (R) **1.45** Come Dine with Me. (R) **4.05** Undercover Boss USA. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake!: Peppa Pig. **6.05** Bananas in Pyjamas. (R) **6.15** Angelina Ballerina. (R) **6.30** Bob the Builder. (R) **6.45** Ticker Tock. (R) **6.55** Zack and Quack. (R) **7.05** Roobarb and Custard Too. (R) **7.15** Make Way for Noddy. (R) **7.25** Paw Patrol. (R) **7.35** Little Princess. (R) **7.50** Pip Ahoy! (R) **8.05** Blaze and the Monster Machines. (R) **8.35** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **8.50** Wanda and the Alien. (R) **9.05** Toby's Travelling Circus. (R) **9.20** Jelly Jam. (R) **9.35** LazyTown. (R) **9.55** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. (R) **10.30** The Championship: Football League Tonight. (R) **11.30** Goal Rush: Football League Tonight. (R) **12.00** Police Interceptors. (R) **1.05** **Film: Drillbit Taylor.** (2008) Comedy, starring Owen Wilson. **3.05** **Film: Space Camp.** (1986) Children's sci-fi adventure, starring Kate Capshaw. **5.05** **Film: Labyrinth.** (1986) Fantasy adventure, starring Jennifer Connelly and David Bowie.
7.05 **Film: The Wedding Planner.** (2001) A single woman who organises weddings for a living is swept off her feet by a dashing doctor, but her dreams of him becoming her husband suffer a setback when she discovers she has already been hired to organise his marriage to another woman. Romantic comedy, starring Jennifer Lopez, Matthew McConaughey, Bridgette Wilson-Sampras, Justin Chambers and Joanna Gleason. Edited for language.
8.55 **5 News Weekend.**
9.00 **Celebrity Big Brother.** A chance to catch up with the latest events inside the house as the celebrities cope with living under constant surveillance, with all the arguments and alliances, as well as the revelations in the diary room.
10.00 **Celebrity Botched Up Bodies.** Leading surgeons repair household names damaged by cosmetic surgery.
10.55 **Film: Mr & Mrs Smith.** (2005) Married assassins are hired to kill each other – a situation that restores some much-needed excitement to their relationship. Comedy adventure, with Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie.
1.10 SuperCasino. Live interactive gaming. **3.10** Bargain-Loving Brits in the Sun. (R) **4.00** House Doctor. (R) **5.45** Angels of Jarm. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Three
7.00 Great TV Mistakes **7.10** Pop's Greatest Dance Crazes **7.40** The Voice UK **9.00** **Film:** Die Hard with a Vengeance (1995) **11.00** Family Guy **11.45** American Dad! **12.30** Siblings **1.00** Adam Pearson: Freak Show **2.00** True North: Keepin' Er Country **2.40** London Fashion Week: Grace Victory's Top Picks **3.05** London Fashion Week: Abby Clancy's Top Picks **3.30** Emergency Rescue Down Under **4.00** Close
BBC Four
7.00 India's Frontier Railways **8.00** Empire of the Tsars: Romanov Russia with Lucy Worsley **9.00** Len Goodman's Dancing Feet: The British Ballroom Story **10.00** Storyville: The Great Gangster Film Fraud **11.25** The Mystery of Murder: A Horizon Guide **12.25** The Brain with David Eagleman **1.25** Blink: A Horizon Guide to the Senses **2.25** Sounds of the Eighties **2.55** Danny Baker's Great Album Showdown **3.55** Close
ITV2
11.55 Take Me Out **1.10** Take Me Out – The Gossip **2.15** **Film:** The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas (2000) **4.00** **Film:** The Mummy (1999) **6.20** **Film:** Cats & Dogs: The Revenge of Kitty Galore (2010) **8.00** **Film:** Skyfall (2012) **10.55** **Film:** The Fast and the Furious: Tokyo Drift (2006) **1.00** Reality Bites **1.45** Planet's Funniest Animals **2.30** Teleshopping
ITV3
12.55 The Return of Sherlock Holmes **2.00** Midsomer Murders **8.00** Me and My Guide Dog **9.00** Caroline Quentin's National Parks **10.00** The Kindness of Strangers **11.35** **Film:** The Hours (2002) **1.45** Secret Smile **3.00** On the Buses **3.30** Heartbeat **5.10** Rising Damp
ITV4
12.20 **Film:** The 'Burbs (1989) **2.25** **Film:** Smokey and the Bandit (1977) **4.15** **Film:** The Sting (1973) **7.00** The Classic Car Show **8.00** River Monsters **9.00** **Film:** Exit Wounds (2001) **11.10** **Film:** Sleepers (1996) **2.05** Ax Men **2.50** **ITV4** Nightscreen **3.00** Teleshopping
E4
5.00 The Big Bang Theory **9.00** Marvel's Agents of SHIELD **10.00** Tattoo Fixers **11.00** Rude Tube **12.10** The Inbetweeners **1.15** The IT Crowd **2.15** Marvel's Agents of SHIELD **3.00** How I Met Your Mother **3.40** Holyoaks
Film4
11.00 Titanic (1953) **1.00** Bride Wars (2009) **2.50** The Last Mimzy (2007) **4.40** Carry On Behind (1975) **6.30** Anna Karenina (2012) **9.00** Bringing Down the House (2003) **11.05** Splice (2009)

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FILM CHOICES

MONDAY

Willed to Kill, Channel 5, 3.15pm

A homicide detective must face up to her own troubled childhood when a serial killer develops a twisted obsession with her. Thriller, with Sarah Jane Morris and Michael Riley. (2012)

TUESDAY

Escape from Polygamy, Channel 5, 3.15pm

A widowed mother joins a religious cult and goes to live in their remote compound, where her teenage daughter falls in love with the son of the group's leader. When the preacher demands that the girl marry him, the two youngsters plan to escape together. Drama, starring Haley Lu Richardson, Jack Falahee and Mary McCormack. (2013)

WEDNESDAY

The Gourmet Detective: A Healthy Place to Die, Channel 5, 3.15pm

Charming culinary expert Henry Ross is invited to give a speech at a food conference at a luxury resort, but when a journalist guest goes missing, and later turns up dead, Henry once again finds himself joining forces with no-nonsense police detective Maggie Price to solve the crime. Detective comedy sequel, starring Dylan Neal and Brooke Burns. (2015)



Fatal Attraction, Friday, Channel 4, 12.55am

THURSDAY

My Daughter Must Live, Channel 5, 3.15pm

A woman discovers that her daughter needs a liver transplant, but medical tests reveal that her husband is not the girl's father. She is forced to track down her former lover, who was last seen fleeing for his life having crossed a corrupt businessman, but the quest jeopardises both her marriage and her life. Thriller, starring Joelle Carter and Madeleine Martin. (2014)

FRIDAY

Fatal Attraction, Channel 4, 12.55am

A married lawyer has a one-night stand with a business associate while his wife and children are out of town. He hopes to keep his infidelity a secret, but she is determined to continue the relationship, and begins obsessively stalking him and his unsuspecting family. Thriller, starring Michael Douglas, Glenn Close and Anne Archer. (1987)

New series serves up a simple yet tasty treat

You just can't keep a good woman down, which perhaps explains why Mary Berry is back on the box this week – not just once, but twice.

She will be judging, alongside regular cohort Paul Hollywood, the efforts of a variety of famous faces who have agreed to take part in the new run of The Great Sport Relief Bake Off, which begins on Wednesday.

But before then, we can catch her in action in this offering, one that takes us back to basics.

Many TV cooks have, over the years, attempted to teach the nation to do more than just open a tin of beans, and they've done it with varying degrees of success. We reckon Mary will turn out to be the best of the lot.

Rather than going through such mundane tasks as boiling an egg or cooking pasta the right way, she offers handy practical tips on how to prepare simple but tasty and quick recipes that will keep everyone at home happy – and even serve you well if you're

organising a dinner party for family or friends.

Commissioning editor Tom Edwards says: "Mary is one of the ultimate icons of cookery programming. It's a delight to serve her latest offering to a BBC Two audience.

"This series connects with something that is essential to Mary – delicious food, made foolproof."

Sadly, Mary's TV career hasn't been foolproof of late. Hollywood attempted to take the Bake off to, er, Hollywood, when he made The American Baking Competition in 2013, but it bombed, never to rise again.

Mary followed in his footsteps late in 2015 with The Great Holiday Baking Show, which aped our own offering as closely as it could. It should have had success' written all over it, but instead it received the same kind of reception as Hollywood would give a tart with a soggy bottom – it lost almost a million viewers in a week.

Despite this setback, Mary is still keen on bringing her homespun wisdom to as many people as possible – and it seems that, if

she is attracted to a project, she will grab it with both hands. It's an approach she credits to a three-month spell she had in hospital after contracting polio as a child; she claims that being away from her family toughened her up and inspired her to make the most of every opportunity.

Mary will turn 81 in March, an age when many people are slowing down and enjoying their retirement. Instead, she heads back into the kitchen – something that delights her army of fans.

In the first edition of this series, she regales viewers with memories of her life, family and friends while demonstrating how to prepare five dishes suitable for special days and celebrations, including salmon fillets with herbs and red pepper and a side dish of spirals of vegetables as well as an indulgent treat of lobster tails with aioli and asparagus.

And if you forget the instructions, as you might have already guessed, Mary has written a book to accompany the series, which is published on Thursday.



Mary Berry's Foolproof Cooking, Monday, BBC2, 8.30pm

BEST OF THE REST

MONDAY

Crashing

Channel 4, 10pm

Life in the dilapidated hospital rumbles on, and we're enjoying every minute of watching it pan out. Phoebe Waller-Bridge's sitcom is an absolute delight, focusing on a group of people who have set up home in a disused building, paying minimal rent while attempting to prevent it becoming derelict. It's a great premise, and one that allows a real mixed bag of characters to take up residence. Among them is resident Irish curry chef Anthony, who this week organises an evening of spicy delights. Unfortunately, his efforts look set to be ignored as the event descends into chaos that leaves not just the fruits of his labour on the floor. Meanwhile, relationships come to the fore as Fred introduces his housemates to his new boyfriend.

TUESDAY

The Mad World of Donald Trump Channel 4, 9pm

He's already a multi-billionaire tycoon, but now Donald Trump is out to become the President of the USA – and by extension, the most powerful person on the planet. His campaign is already one of the most controversial the US has ever seen, complete with plans to ban Muslims from entering the States

and to construct a wall to keep out Mexican immigrants. However, his promise to 'make America great again' has clearly resonated with many voters, and he's currently leading the polls for the Republican presidential nomination. Here, Matt Frei tries to uncover the man behind the brand, exploring Trump's colourful past and asking if he really could make it all the way to the White House.

WEDNESDAY

Holocaust Memorial Day BBC2, 7pm

With more than 200 survivors in attendance, a unique commemoration at Guildhall, London marks Holocaust Memorial Day and remembers those persecuted and murdered by the Nazis, and those who died in later genocides. The ceremony includes personal testimony, music and poetry, with actors Sheila Hancock, Robert Lindsay, Kevin Whately and Freddie Fox taking part. Plus, the internationally renowned choir of Clare College Cambridge performs, and acclaimed violinist Jennifer Pike plays the theme from Schindler's List.

The Great Sport Relief Bake Off BBC1, 8.30pm

The celebrity edition of The Great British Bake Off returns, with each episode featuring four celebrities as they tackle three challenges set by judges Paul Hollywood and Mary Berry. Mel Giedroyc hosts the first edition, as comedian Jason Manford, Eastenders actress Maddy Hill, ex-England goalkeeper David James, and business woman and wife of the Prime Minister Samantha Cameron bake for Sport Relief in the Bake Off tent. For the signature challenge, they must make 24 canapes using rough puff pastry made from scratch, before creating Paris Brest, a French pastry confection, in the technical.



The Great Sport Relief Bake Off, Wednesday, BBC1, 8.30pm

THURSDAY Britain's Bloody Crown Channel 5, 8pm

Historian Dan Jones's part-

dramatised journey through the War of the Roses reaches its thrilling conclusion tonight. At the centre of the story is Margaret Beaufort, a woman who could be described as being the power behind the throne. She was the mother of Henry Tudor, the man who defeated Richard III at the battle of Bosworth in 1485, and who was eventually crowned as Henry VII. Jones begins Mary's story in January 1457 when, at 13, two months after her husband's death, she gave birth to Henry, and set about doing whatever was necessary to protect her son and keep in her the monarch's good books. But it was her manipulation of certain events, enabling Henry to take control of the country, that remains Mary's biggest achievement.

FRIDAY

MOTD Live: The FA Cup BBC1, 7.30pm

Derby County v Manchester United (Kick-off 7.55pm). Gary Lineker presents coverage of the match from the fourth round of the famous competition, which takes place at the iPro Stadium. The Rams – chasing promotion back to the Premier League for the first time since the 2007/08 season – will fancy their chances against the Red Devils, who have come under fire this season for playing negative football and suffering some shock defeats.



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Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 14 | 26 | 12 | 9 | | 4 | 10 | 8 | 18 | 15 | 20 | 2 | 24 |
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| 1 | 24 | 21 | | | 15 | | 11 | 8 | 12 | 21 | | |
| 21 | | 1 | | 21 | 6 | 20 | 9 | | 2 | | 9 | |
| | 8 | 5 | 20 | 3 | | 10 | 23 | 21 | 9 | 9 | 16 | |
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| 18 | 10 | 20 | 19 | 21 | | 18 | 11 | 26 | 8 | 9 | | |
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| 10 | 8 | 17 | 9 | | | 26 | | | 18 | 21 | 8 | |
| 18 | | 1 | | 26 | 11 | 12 | 20 | 22 | 1 | 21 | 10 | |
| 12 | | 24 | 18 | | | 12 | | | 10 | | 10 | |
| 21 | 14 | 21 | 7 | 9 | 17 | 1 | 12 | | 10 | 21 | 12 | 16 |

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| U | E | G | R | W | Z | H | D | F | C | J | Q | O |
| A | B | S | N | I | V | X | M | K | Y | T | P | L |

Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

Cryptic Clues:

Across

- 6 & 7Ac. Distress call from deprived fishermen, we hear! (4,3,5)
7. See 6 Across
9. A kind of driver for the propeller (5)
10 & 13Dn. Mail intended for London? (7,7)
12. Transport for one who wishes to retire (8-3)
14. Disease won't upset this resort (7,4)
18. It's at no different boarding place (7)
19. 1Dn. & 20Dn. Their job isn't to prevent daylight robbery! (5-8)
21. Manage to get through the exercise (5)
22. See 11 Down

Down

1. See 19 Across
2. Expose the facts about meat (6)
3. Potter needs it - that's a hint (3)
4. Successfully handling a kind of saw (6)
5. It annually contains an astronomical amount of information (7)
8. A trial's disrupted by cowboys' equipment (7)
11 & 22Ac. Set out for the mountains, if you have one! (4,3,7)
13. See 10 Across
15. Pay for the bench (6)
16. Removes moisture from the arenas, we hear (6)
17. Talks in church at services (5)
20. See 19 Across

| | | | | | |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| 6 | | | | | 7 |
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| 14 | | | | | 17 |
| 18 | | | | 19 | |
| | | | 20 | | |
| 21 | | | | 22 | |

Quick Clues:

Across

6. Generous (7)
7. Hoist (5)
9. Fashion (5)
10. Arrange (7)
12. Dishonour (11)
14. In brackets (11)
18. Twist (7)
19. Horse (5)
21. Portion (5)
22. Sorrow (7)

Down

1. Smaller (5)
2. Deny (6)
3. Whim (3)
4. Dictator (6)
5. Quibble (7)
8. Violinist (7)
11. Authors (7)
13. Pithy (7)
15. Allure (6)
16. Set (6)
17. Poetry (5)
20. Beam (3)

Sudoku

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 6 | 4 | | 1 | | 5 | |
| 1 | | | | | | 6 | | 9 |
| | 7 | 9 | | 6 | | | 4 | 1 |
| 7 | | | | | 4 | | 8 | |
| 2 | | | | 7 | 6 | | | 3 |
| | 3 | | 5 | | | | | |
| 9 | | | | 1 | | | 7 | 8 |
| 3 | | 8 | 4 | | | | | 2 |
| | 6 | | | | 9 | 1 | | |

Fill in the grid below so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS >

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 9 | 5 | 3 | 4 | 7 | 1 | 8 | 6 | 2 |
| 8 | 6 | 7 | 9 | 3 | 2 | 5 | 4 | 1 |
| 4 | 2 | 1 | 6 | 5 | 8 | 9 | 7 | 3 |
| 2 | 1 | 5 | 8 | 6 | 4 | 3 | 9 | 7 |
| 7 | 4 | 9 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 6 | 5 | 8 |
| 6 | 3 | 8 | 5 | 9 | 7 | 2 | 1 | 4 |
| 3 | 9 | 4 | 7 | 2 | 6 | 1 | 8 | 5 |
| 5 | 7 | 2 | 1 | 6 | 9 | 4 | 3 | 8 |
| 1 | 8 | 6 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 7 | 2 | 9 |

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS: CRYPTIC - Across: 6 Grained; 7 Auric; 9 Ace; 10 Revolving; 12 Misanthrope; 15 Sit-down meal; 17 Take place; 19 Dot; 21 Lease; 22 Hastier. Down: 1 Brace; 2 Tip; 3 Mete; 4 Cut-throat; 5 Kidnaps; 8 Bottom; 11 Wild beast; 13 As well; 14 Minaret; 16 Moses; 18 Char; 20 Sly. QUICK - Across: 6 Conceal; 7 Tease; 9 Fee; 10 Dejection; 12 Ups-and-downs; 15 Yellow fever; 17 Occupying; 19 Elk; 21 Under; 22 Awkward. Down: 1 Cover; 2 Act; 3 Base; 4 Destroyer; 5 Astound; 8 Meddle; 11 Applauded; 13 Always; 14 Descend; 16 Alert; 18 News; 20 Own.

Thinking space

Quiz

- What, in film-making, is a blimp?
- Between which two countries is the Brenner Pass?
- In which century did printer William Caxton live?
- Who was the Muse of history in Greek mythology?
- What is the international car registration for Denmark?
- In which year was the Eiffel Tower erected?
- What is the term for a person who makes arrows?
- In which country are one hundred grosz worth one zloty?
- What was the real name of Al Jolson?
- What sort of animal is a kob?

Last week's solutions:
Quiz: 1 Pax; 2 Pickwick Papers; 3 12th August; 4 Offenbach; 5 Subscriber Trunk Dialling; 6 Jean Cocteau; 7 A breed of domestic fowl; 8 Sibelius; 9 Japan; 10 Pacific.
Niner: OBSTINACY

Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

7517 gives a song,
67894 gives a dance,
342219 gives a game.

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

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Comfortable and spacious interior with choice of seating options



Round off the meal with a delicious sweet



The Manor House of Whittington, formerly the Whittington Pub, on the A449



Camembert with rosemary and garlic

To the Manor House born and fed with service fit for royalty

STANDING outside The Manor House at Whittington I really felt I should be wearing twinset and pearls, not jeans and a jumper.

It looks rather grand and posh from the outside as well as cosy and inviting. The exterior gives little hint as to what is inside.

I was expecting a quaint, simple sleek interior. But what is actually waiting is a modern, contemporary, clean finish mixing a touch of traditional style with a more quirky and eclectic look.

The Grade-I listed building dates back to 1310 when it was built by Sir William de Whittington and apparently welcomed royalty during its historic past. It reopened last November after a major refurbishment of what was once The Whittington Inn.

Thankfully the bright yellow exterior has

Lisa Williams reports

long gone as is the tired and dated interior. It's been lovingly restored, with a £1.5 million price tag.

My boyfriend and I, along with both sets of parents, ventured in. The bright, glowing flames from an open fire were the first thing we saw. The bar area is airy and light.

Our table was comfy and intimate but a little bit too near the kitchen as we kept hearing the chef shout 'service', but it turns out this was also a good thing as we could see the food coming out and the pizzas being made. All of which looked scrumptious.

It had only been open a week so we were prepared for teething problems. There were a few, I'll get to them later.

We sat taking in the menu. The online version was not the same. My parents were ready for a turkey dinner and a risotto dish

neither of which featured. We quizzed our waitress, Stacey, who went to find out what was going on. Apparently it's the wrong menu online. Oops! Hopefully this is now resolved. Most was the same though so it was no great drama.

Charm

Service was slow at times but the staff, who were friendly and lovely, were probably finding their feet.

Drinks arrived, orders were taken and we sat back to take in the new decor. Rich burgundy and teal added a bright touch to the classic olde worlde charm.

For starters we'd gone for a couple of Camembert sharers with great hunks of toasted sourdough bread and a sticky onion jam on the side. It was gorgeously gooey.

For the mains I'd gone for a pretty basic pizza, less is more. Marinated buffalo mozz-

arella, mozzarella, sun-dried tomatoes and basil on the best base I've ever tasted.

Mum had gone for the butternut squash tart. She loved the flavours but the potato salad was a little dry with no dressing. Dad had the Jospo roasted half chicken, in beer, thyme and malt butter and enjoyed it.

The fish and chips were also a success as the boyfriend's mum tucked in. For the boyfriend and his father burgers arrived, great stacks of chargrilled, perfectly pink in the middle. But... the burgers were cold. They were swiftly and politely replaced with plenty of apologies.

Some of us saved room for dessert. I was defeated but two portions of the dark chocolate and raspberry brownie were ordered.

Full, sated and happy, we all agreed we would return soon. While the food does need a teeny tiny bit of improving, the four stars go to the staff.

WELCOME TO THE SAMSON & LION

Saturday 30th January

Knockout Darts Tournament

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We also hold a popular music festival a couple of times a year and plans are underway to create a Folk/Jazz club in the cellar bar (musicians get in touch!).

Here's what a typical week entails at the Samson and Lion of Stourbridge.



BAND REHEARSALS / MEETING ROOM FUNCTION ROOM FOR HIRE

Fridays

Karaoke unless function prohibits.

Saturdays

Bonus Ball Pay-out and many functions.

Sundays

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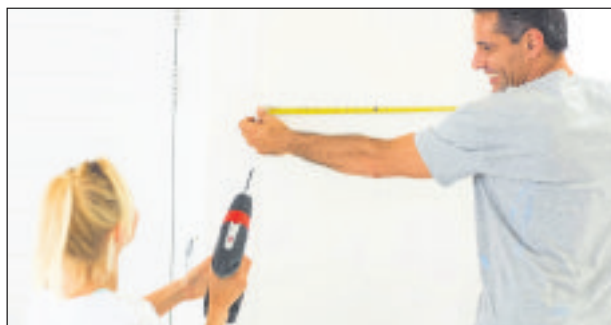
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Property

YOUR WEEKLY GUIDE TO HOME BUYING AND LETTING



Choosing the right agent for your home

SELECTING which estate agency to sell your home (your biggest asset) can be worrying for anyone. You can make your decision more straightforward by following a few simple rules:

The first thing to do when searching for a quality estate agent is to check that they belong to a professional body like the NAEA. This is because all our members have to complete an accredited qualification on estate agency and are bound by strict rules. Selecting an agent who is one of our members will ensure your peace of mind as they offer a solid understanding of the market, and furthermore, we offer you a fair complaints procedure.

A great help when selecting an agent is reputation. If family, friends, neighbours or people you know have had a good experience with a particular agent, then this can be a great help in making your decision.

Look out for the number of 'for sale' signs and in particular 'sold' signs around your local area. This will tell you which agents are most popular, and therefore can generate more leads for you.

Advertisements for properties in the local newspapers will also tell you which agents stand out from the rest and also tell you which areas the agents cover. The local press will help to inform you how the local market is performing. This empowers you when talking to agents, buyers and interested parties.

Make sure you get on well with your chosen agent – this will be invaluable during the whole process.

Remember, choosing a member of the NAEA offers higher standards, protection and a complaints procedure for you. You can search for NAEA members at <http://www.naea.co.uk/find-agent/>

Making your home more attractive

THERE'S a range of things you can do to make your home more attractive when you decide to put it on the market, from reorganising the furniture to tidying the garden.

A welcoming kitchen is one of the biggest attractions for potential house buyers. Whether you have a comfortable family oriented meeting place or a stylish singletons galley, the kitchen is most often the heart of the home.

Regardless of your budget, there are a number of simple ways you can maximise its attraction to buyers and speed up the sale of your house: Replacing your entire kitchen to attract buyers is not always necessary. Often the cost of installing a new kitchen outweighs the value it will add to your asking price. Like all home decor, the kitchen will still be subject to personal taste, so if it does not appeal to your buyers they will refit it upon moving in anyway. If your kitchen is very dated, simple changes can make all the difference. Painting the cupboard doors, replacing handles or taps and re-grouting the tiles can all give a new lease of life.

Clean and de-clutter! Viewers may even look in your cupboards so ensure shelves are cleaned and all contents are organised. Any pet bowls should go outside as potential buyers may not be animal lovers so could be put off by the sight of half eaten pet food.

If necessary, box up items you don't use very often and put them in storage. If your cupboards and drawers are overflowing, buyers will assume there is little storage space, which can be off-putting. Keep work surfaces as clear as possible to enhance the



appearance of cleanliness.

Flowers or pot pourri on window sills create a welcoming atmosphere and add a fresh fragrance.

Using these simple but effective ideas will ensure your kitchen looks appealing and entices potential buyers into a prompt decision! No matter how big your home, it's important to maximise the rooms to create a sense of space, especially if you are trying to sell your property.

Here are some tips to make any home feel more spacious:

Mirrors are great for making your home feel

more spacious. In small areas large mirrors can be used to make the room look longer or wider. They are especially useful in hallways where they can be used to manipulate the perception of space by reflecting light and colour.

Having too big a dining table in your dining room can make the area shrink. To maximize space, put up roman blinds rather than curtains, and plan your storage carefully so that clutter is out of sight. This is especially important in the bedroom, because the less clutter you see, the more relaxing the room will be.

Match neutral colours on the walls with similar

flooring in downstairs spaces to give the impression of space flowing from one room to another. Bright shades of carpet or distracting patterns are to be avoided.

If you follow all of these ideas then you are sure to achieve the maximum use of space in your home, and in turn attain the highest possible price for it.

Gardens are too often forgotten in the race to make the most of a property, but their condition can sometimes be the deciding factor on value. It's a common-held belief that the decision on whether or not to buy a property is made within the first few moments of viewing it.

The state of the front garden is therefore a prime consideration for anyone choosing to sell their home. Drive-by desirability is all important as first impressions really do count. Make sure your front garden is neat, tidy and easily maintained. Hanging baskets and flower troughs establish the cared-for look without creating too much work. Any lawn areas should be neatly trimmed, and trees cut back and controlled. A well-presented front door, with pots alongside it, goes a long way towards generating a sense of welcome.

The back of the house is arguably even more important than the front, as this is where the most work is likely to lie. Today's busy lifestyle means the majority of people don't have much time to spend on gardening, so creating some low maintenance areas is invaluable. Decking, paving and woodchips can be used to differentiate areas of the garden and simplify them. Any trees and hedges should be kept under control and fences maintained.



They're sold

Turn to your local estate agent to sell your property and you will be **SOLD ON:**

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- Local area knowledge
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- Registered house hunters
- Solid marketing advice to help you sell fast

If you are thinking of selling, look no further than the estate agents in these pages for the best local advice available.

No chain with this semi near King George V Park



WITHIN walking distance of King George V Park, this three-bedroomed semi-detached property in Bells Lane, Stourbridge.

It is for sale through Select Property Management at £129,950 with no chain.

With gas central heating, it has an entrance hall, storage and stairs off, a lounge with a wall mounted fire, kitchen with gas hob and cooker hood, ground floor shower room, three first floor bedrooms, bathroom and gardens. Call Select Property Management on (01384) 277701 or visit www.selectsalesandlettings.com



Hicks Hadley

hickshadley.com
0121 585 6667

Halesowen Office Lettings & Property Management



BIRMINGHAM, Orion Building £800 pcm+Fees
A fantastic opportunity to rent a fully furnished apartment in the heart of Birmingham City Centre. This 1 bed modern property overlooking the Mailbox features open plan living with 24 hour concierge service and secure underground parking (permit required), double glazed and electric heating. Viewings highly recommended. EPC: C



HALESOWEN, Banners Lane £795 pcm+Fees
An unfurnished 3 bedroom detached family home with gas central heating and off road parking for 3 cars. This great property has entrance porch, hallway with Minton tiled floor, front lounge, modern good size kitchen with French doors leading to the conservatory, utility room, 3 bedrooms and a family bathroom with shower. To the front of the property is off road parking and to the rear a large private garden with raised decking area. EPC: D



HALESOWEN, Richmond Street £675 pcm+Fees
A spacious and well presented 3 bedroom semi detached property in the heart of Halesowen. This lovely family home benefits from gas central heating and double glazing and briefly offers: Entrance hall, dining room, fitted kitchen, spacious lounge, landing, 3 good size bedrooms, re-fitted family bathroom and an additional w.c. To the front of the property is off road parking for 2 cars and to the rear a tiered garden. EPC: E



HALESOWEN, Sanderson Place £650 pcm+Fees
Luxury living in Hayley Green. A superb ground floor apartment offering spacious accommodation including open plan lounge/kitchen and diner, 2 double bedrooms, master with en-suite, further well appointed bathroom with shower, gas central heating, double glazing and allocated parking. EPC: B



HALESOWEN, Long Lane £625 pcm+Fees
A Victorian style semi detached house in this very convenient & popular location. This lovely property has recently been refurbished and comprises of: entrance hall with Minton flooring, front dining room, lounge, fitted kitchen, utility room, 3 good size bedrooms, bathroom with shower and rear garden. EPC: D



HALESOWEN, Hunnington Crescent £625 pcm+Fees
Recently redecorated and carpeted. This huge 3 bedroom town house has had a full redecoration, carpets and boiler. This house will not stay around for long as its so close to Halesowen Town Centre. Featuring 3 bedrooms, a large lounge with stunning views, bathroom with shower, driveway and garage parking, downstairs wc, small low maintenance rear garden. EPC: D



HALESOWEN, Hagley Road £595 pcm+Fees
A superb 2 bedroom flat in central Halesowen. This property has been fully refurbished to a very high standard and must be seen to be appreciated. Private secure entrance with alarm, large lounge, stunning kitchen/dining area with appliances, utility room/downstairs w.c., 2 bedrooms, shower room, rear courtyard. EPC: TBC



MERRY HILL, Columbus Avenue £575 pcm+Fees
Ideal for shopping. Centrally located on the Merry Hill Shopping Centre and transport links. This fabulous apartment features modern decoration and can not be missed, and features 2 double bedrooms, dual aspect lounge/diner, fitted kitchen, house bathroom with shower, en-suite to master bedroom, allocated parking. Minimum contract for 12 months. EPC: TBC



HALESOWEN, Colley Lane £575 pcm+Fees
A superb location close to Merry Hill & Cradley Heath train station is this 2 bedroom semi-detached house comprising of: Hallway, lounge, refitted breakfast/kitchen with oven/hob, upstairs bathroom with shower, 2 bedrooms & a further carpeted loft room, rear patio with astro turf & roller shutter door to parking area, gas central heating. EPC: D



CRADLEY HEATH, Wallace Rise £575 pcm+Fees
1ST MONTHS RENT HALF PRICE! A beautifully refurbished 3 bedroom and terraced house. This lovely home is situated on the Timbertree Estate and ideal for local schools and bus links. The house features 2 large & 1 single bedrooms, front reception room, brand new kitchen/dining area, new bathroom with shower, good size private rear garden, on road parking. EPC: D



HALESOWEN, Southwick Road £530 pcm+Fees
Located minutes from Blackheath Town Centre and a short drive away from the M5 J2. This refurbished 2 bed mid-terraced house features a brand new fitted kitchen, 2 lovely reception rooms, private rear garden, white bathroom suite with shower, 2 double bedrooms, on road parking. EPC: D



BRIERLEY HILL, Pheasant Street £525 pcm+Fees
Immaculately presented mid terrace house in close proximity to Merry Hill Centre comprising of: Good sized reception room, refitted kitchen/dining space, refitted bathroom, 2 double bedrooms, gas central heating, rear garden, parking area to front. EPC: D



BRIERLEY HILL, Grosvenor Way £525 pcm+Fees
Located on a popular estate close to Merry Hill Shopping Centre. This 3 bedroom property features: Large lounge, fitted kitchen with oven/hob and washing machine, 1 double bedroom and 2 singles, bathroom with shower over bath, low maintenance rear garden, communal parking area. Also benefiting from electric heating and double glazing. EPC: E



DUDLEY, Attingham Drive £495 pcm+Fees
A part furnished 2nd floor apartment close to Dudley Town Centre. Featuring an open plan lounge/dining kitchen, 2 bedrooms, bathroom with a shower, electric storage heating, double glazing, alarm, allocated parking. EPC: TBC



DUDLEY, Gamage Street £475 pcm+Fees
Ideal for Russells Hall Hospital, Dudley Town Centre and transport links. This 2nd floor 2 bedroom property has been refurbished with new carpets upstairs, new Worcester combi boiler and integrated oven. This home features an entrance hall, dining room, lounge, kitchen, 2 double bedrooms, upstairs bathroom with shower, rear garden with patio area, on road parking. EPC: F



QUINTON, College Road £475 pcm+Fees
Large flat available above a shop close to direct bus links to Birmingham comprising of lounge, fitted kitchen with oven/hob, 2 large double bedrooms plus extra study/storage room, white bathroom with shower, electric plug in heating. Available Now. EPC: G



NETHERTON, St Georges Road £395 pcm+Fees
Beautiful refurbishment in a quiet location. This 1st floor apartment features electric storage heating, living room, brand new kitchen, 1 very large double bedroom, brand new house bathroom with shower, rear garden, parking space. Viewings recommended to appreciate this nicely proportioned flat. EPC: D



ROWLEY REGIS, Winchester Close £395 pcm+Fees
A well presented, unfurnished 1st floor apartment, close to the M5 J2. This apartment features 2 bedrooms, fitted kitchen, lounge, double glazing, bathroom with shower, parking space and parking area for visitors, communal gardens. EPC: D



HALESOWEN, Somers Road £375 pcm+Fees
A 1 bedroom 1st floor apartment offering generous accommodation including: lounge with open plan kitchen, double bedroom with en-suite shower room, double glazing, communal garden, on road parking, unfurnished. EPC: G



LYE, High Street £375 pcm+Fees
Fully refurbished in the centre of Lye. This spacious 2nd floor apartment features a lovely lounge, 1 double bedroom, bathroom, modern and contemporary kitchen/diner, electric heating, double glazing, on road parking. Available now. EPC: E



LYE, High Street £330 pcm+Fees
Located in the centre of Lye at Lye Cross. This 2nd floor flat above shops features a large lounge, kitchen, 1 double bedroom, bathroom with shower, and is available immediately. EPC: TBC

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**Off Kingsway
Hamilton Street**
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* Fitted kitchen
* Two bedrooms
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EPC=C
Offers in the region of £67,500



Halesowen



Gower Road
* Spacious detached house
* Three bedrooms
* Lounge * Dining room
* Breakfast kitchen & Re-fitted bathroom
* Utility/WC
* Delightful garden
EPC=E
Offers in the region of £257,500



Halesowen



Carters Lane
* Detached
* Three Bedrooms
* Two Reception Rooms
* Kitchen/Breakfast Room
* Rear Garden * Side Garage
* In need of some general modernisation
EPC=D
Offers in the region of £259,950



Rowley Regis



Britannia Road
* Mid terraced house
* Two bedrooms
* Shower room
* Rear garage
* Rear garden
EPC=tbc
Offers in the region of £97,000



Halesowen



Manor Abbey Road
* Detached house
* Extended living room and extended kitchen/
breakfast room
* Three bedrooms
* Garage
EPC=D
Offers in the region of £299,950



Halesowen



Woodland Road
* Detached bungalow
* Side garage
* Two bedrooms
* Kitchen/breakfast room
* Good sized rear garden
EPC=E
Offers in the region of £199,950



Halesowen



Roundhills Road
* Detached house with 4 bedrooms
* Lounge, sitting room & conservatory
* Kitchen, utility, fitted cloakroom
* Bi-fold doors from conservatory opening to landscaped gardens
* Garage, two drives, gas boiler heating radiators EPC=D
£219,950



Halesowen



Carters Lane
* Detached family house extended at rear
* Scope for some upgrading and re-planning
* Kitchen (utility, shower room, and store formed out of garage)
* Three reception rooms
* Three bedrooms * Bathroom with separate wc
* Pleasant gardens EPC=E
Offers in the region of £275,000



Halesowen



Middlefield Avenue
* Semi detached house
* Through living room and dining room and extended kitchen
* Utility and wc
* Four bedrooms
* Garage
* Good sized rear garden EPC=D
Offers in the region of £224,950



Rowley Regis



Holly Road
* Ideal for first time buyer/investor
* Terraced House
* Two Bedrooms
* Conservatory
* Good Sized rear garden
* No upward Chain
EPC=D
Offers in the region of £89,950

Halesowen



Hamilton Avenue
* Detached house
* Three bedrooms
* Two reception rooms
* Gas central heating
* Double glazing to windows as detailed
* Garage and car port
EPC=D
Offers in the region of £229,950

Halesowen



Manor Lane
* Scope for some general modernisation
* Detached house with large garden
* Lounge, separate dining room
* Kitchen/breakfast room
* Four bedrooms, bathroom with both bath and shower * Garage and carport * Close to local shops and the Royal Oak Public House EPC=D
Offers in the region of £299,950



Rowley Regis



Darby Street
* Semi-detached bungalow
* Kitchen/breakfast room
* Living room
* Dining room/potential second bedroom
* Bedroom
* Garage
EPC=D
Offers in the region of £139,950

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* Bedroom, bedroom 2/dining room, bathroom
* Pleasant gardens, off road parking, gas boiler radiators
EPC=D
Offers in the region of £125,000

Halesowen



Long Lane
* End terraced house
* Two reception rooms
* Three bedrooms
* Ground floor shower room with wc
* First floor en-suite bathroom
EPC=F
Offers in the region of £109,950

Oldbury



Cornwall Avenue
* Mid terraced house
* In need of general modernisation
* 3 bedrooms
* 2 reception rooms
EPC=D
Offers in the region of £105,000

Halesowen



**Oaklands Court
Spies Lane**
* Second floor flat
* Living room
* Two bedrooms
* Communal parking
* Communal gardens
EPC=C
Offers in the region of £119,950

Oldbury



Warwick Close
* End terraced house
* Living room
* Kitchen diner
* Two good sized bedrooms
* Shower room with separate wc
* Ideal for first time buyers
EPC=D
Offers in the region of £124,950

Halesowen



Lusbridge Close
* Detached house situated in cul-de-sac
* Kitchen/breakfast room
* Utility
* Two reception rooms and conservatory
* Four bedrooms (one with en-suite)
* Garage
EPC=D
Offers in the region of £279,950

Halesowen



**Lyttleton House
Blackberry Lane**
* Retirement flat
* Two bedrooms
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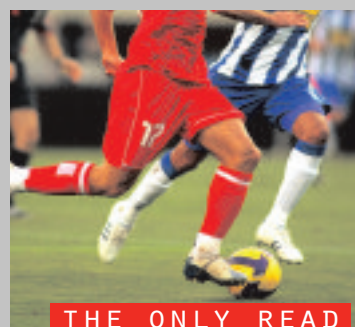
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Notice of Deposit of Development Plan Document
Dudley Borough Development Strategy (Publication Stage Document) Regulation 19 Publication Consultation

The Dudley Borough Development Strategy is currently being prepared to guide development within the Borough up to 2026. It consists of local planning policies and site allocations across the Borough (excluding the town Centres of Brierley Hill, Stourbridge, Halesowen and Dudley which have their own Area Action Plans) and, once adopted, will supersede the Dudley Unitary Development Plan.

Following previous consultation on a Preferred Options version in 2014 and further modifications in September 2015, this Publication stage version is the final opportunity to comment on the Dudley Borough Development Strategy before it is submitted to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government.

Copies of the document are available for public inspection during normal office hours from Monday 11th January 2016 to Monday 22nd February 2016 at;

- Dudley Council, main reception**, 4 Ednam Road, Dudley, West Midlands, DY1 1HL (Monday to Friday 8.45am to 5:00pm)
- Dudley Council Plus**, 259 Castle Street, Dudley Town Centre, Dudley, West Midlands, DY1 1LQ (Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5:00pm, Saturday 9:00am to 12:00pm);
- On request at the main public libraries** in Brierley Hill, Dudley, Halesowen and Stourbridge (opening times may vary)
- On the Council's planning website at: www.dudley.gov.uk/resident/planning/planning-policy/local-development.

Comments that relate to "the soundness" of the plan or whether the plan "complies with legal requirements" may be submitted between 11th January and 22nd February in writing to:

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Only comments made in writing and which arrive at the postal address or e-mail address specified above by 22nd February 2016 will be able to be considered by Dudley Council. Comments may also be accompanied by a request to be notified of the submission and of the Document and details of the independent examination of the Document which is held prior to its adoption.

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Kia Optima's evolution

By James Parker

The fourth-generation Optima has a modern, new exterior, a bold interior design with more space for occupants, new technologies and a wide choice of efficient powertrains.

The new model offers greater refinement and improved ride and handling over the outgoing model, while retaining the sporty image that has helped Optima become one of Kia's best-selling models worldwide.

The Kia Optima plays an important role in the Kia Motors Europe product line-up, introducing the brand to an increasing number of new customers. Since the third-generation model launched in 2011, with its distinctive look, high-quality interior and high-tech image, the Optima has offered buyers something fresh and different in the D-segment.

The all-new Optima's evolutionary new look was designed to be functional and sporty, with exterior dimensions that are marginally longer, taller and wider. These changes enable a roomier and more comfortable cabin, with more head-, shoulder- and rear-seat leg-room and greater cargo capacity.

This model is the most aerodynamic Optima to date, with drag reduced from 0.3 to 0.29 Cd.

The all-new Kia Optima will be available in Europe in a choice of nine colours, with

alloy wheels ranging from 16-in to 18in diameter.

The material quality of the all-new Optima's cabin is significantly improved over the outgoing model, with a far higher proportion of soft-touch materials, as well as cloth and leather trim in natural tones.

Tasteful metallic accents throughout the cabin add a higher quality ambience to the interior.

The larger interior and exterior dimensions ensure that the all-new model is the most practical, spacious and comfortable. Cargo space has grown from 505 to 510 litres (VDA), with the under-floor storage area and a wider boot opening adding greater practicality.

High-strength

It features a uniquely engineered body which combines more high-strength materials than ever before, resulting in even higher standards of crash safety. While passive safety is improved, the new model is also equipped with a series of high-tech active and autonomous safety features, and Kia's engineers have targeted a five-star Euro NCAP safety rating throughout the Optima's development programme.

Kia's vehicle stability management is fitted as standard, ensuring stability under braking and cornering by controlling the car's electronic stability control and electric motor-driven power steering if it detects a loss of traction.

The Optima is available with a wide range of optional active hazard-avoidance technologies, depending on market.



.....
The new model offers greater refinement and improved ride and handling

Improving ride and handling was a top priority for Kia's dynamic development teams, with a focus on delivering the ride comfort and stability customers expect from a D-segment sedan, while achieving the level of agility promised by the car's sportier appearance.

The all-new Optima debuts a number of new, advanced on-board technologies to improve usability, comfort and convenience.

The touchscreen infotainment system is paired with a six-speaker audio system as standard.

A powerful Harman Kardon premium sound system, featuring 10 speakers, an external amplifier and Clari-Fi MP3 restoration technology, is also available as an option.

The all-new Kia Optima will offer the company's unique seven-year, 150,000km warranty as standard.

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Three to the fore with MG

The MG3 was designed with the intention of being fun to drive, the chassis having been subjected to many thousands of miles of testing on European roads.

The engine is a 1.5-litre 106PS four cylinder unit that naturally drives the front wheels. There's nothing revolutionary about the suspension which is fairly standard set-up with MacPherson struts up front and a torsion beam at the rear. You also get a drive-by-wire braking system and an electrically-assisted power steering set up.

The exterior styling looks quite smart, if maybe a little supermini-generic in a way that could have been produced from one of many manufacturers in this sector if you covered the badges over.

The MG3 is tidy inside. There are a few white touches around the stereo,

on the steering wheel, the door pulls, handbrake and gear lever but aside from that, everything is uniformly grey. Sit in the back seats and you'll find the front seats are sculpted to improve leg room, while the rear headroom is genuinely impressive.

Prices start at under £8,500, getting you this supermini-sized car for less than the kind of money you'd pay for a little city car.

All models get signature front LED lights and a hill holder clutch as standard, with all but the entry model featuring a high quality DAB audio system. Safety-wise, there are six airbags, electronic stability control, corner brake control and traction control.

The entry-level model is the MG3 3TIME which features a CD player with MP3 compatibility and Aux-in facility. Next up is the MG3 3FORM which adds air conditioning, that DAB radio,

Bluetooth with audio streaming, a leather MG-design steering wheel with red stitching and steering wheel audio controls to the tally. A '3FORM SPORT' variant also adds a bodykit and 16" alloy wheels.

At the top of the range is the MG3 3STYLE with premium 16" 'Diamond' alloy wheels and a sports body styling pack that includes the rear boot spoiler and side sill extensions. Standard high-tech convenience features include cruise control, automatic lights and windscreen wipers and reverse parking sensors, all for around £10,000.

However, the key attraction for many people will be how much fun you can have creating your own MG3, with its huge range of colours, exterior graphics, interior colour packs and leather upholstery created by the UK design team and inspired by the British fashion industry.

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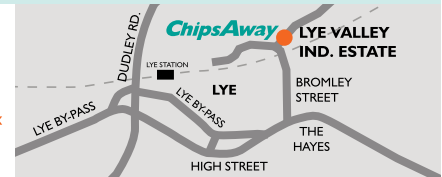
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Suzuki's Celerio an honest car

By John Griffiths

You may have noticed that new car prices are on a rapid upward spiral, so that even some of the 'value' brands now cost the sort of money which would have bought you a premium saloon a few years ago.

But to be fair, even the most cynical among us can't put automotive inflation down to simple profiteering. There is, for example, mounting pressure on car makers to make massive investments in research and development in the fields of safety, fuel economy and reducing exhaust emissions.

Jaguar Land Rover's £1 billion investment in a new plant to produce the super efficient Ingenium diesel engine on the outskirts of Wolverhampton is one example. Then, of course, there are the new hybrid and fuel cell technologies.

Buyers are also demanding more: some cars now have so many electronic gadgets we older folk need a further education course to use them properly. But where does that leave those of us who can't afford a new car, with the benefits of a fuel efficient engine and a peace of mind warranty?

Well, there's the Suzuki Celerio. With one of the largest cabins in the 'city car' class, over 60mpg, zero road tax and one of the cheapest new cars you can buy with prices from £7,414. That's the price for the entry level 'S22' test car: a practical hatchback with few frills but all the essentials. There are better equipped Celerios further up the range, and even a more economical engine, but this base model is hard to beat if you want true value for money motoring.

It still comes, for example, with a full safety package including anti-lock brakes with electronic brake force distribution, emergency brake assist, electronic stability control and six airbags.

There's also a decent DAB radio and CD player, tinted glass electric front windows and an effective heater – but no air conditioning and you have to adjust the wing mirrors with little manual levers instead of electric switches.

The three cylinder, one litre engine has an official fuel average of 65.7mpg, a CO2 rating of 99g/km (so no road tax under current regulations) and insurance shouldn't break the bank with a low 7E (out of 50) rating.

It was a brave decision by Suzuki to replace two older models (the Alto and the Splash) with one, the Celerio. There was an initial problem with a brake part, too, but the company recommissioned the part and retro fitted it to those cars which had already gone out to dealers within days.

The result? Well the Celerio has proved to be a big seller for Suzuki, indicating its the right package which convinces test-driving customers.

Footprint

The Celerio has a small 'footprint' but it's also relatively high which means it's been laid out to seat four adults in comfort – even a 6ft 6ins colleague wasn't cramped in the rear. With its tall stance and five doors, access is easy too.

With light, power assisted steering, a higher-than-average seating position and deep windows it's a breeze to park and to handle around town.

The steering is positive, too, which helps makes the Celerio a pleasant car to drive on the open road. With 68bhp it's no ball of fire but keeps up with even motorway traffic without fuss or excessive engine noise. A typical Suzuki motor, it's more of a purr than a growl.

The ride feels a little firm over poor surfaces, but it's sufficiently well damped to ensure comfort and prevent the bumps throwing the steering off track.

The slowest moving part of the test car was the fuel guage: while I didn't manage the official 65.7mpg, over a week of driving the actual figure was close to 60mpg which is the best I remember from a petrol car.

If you want, or can afford, to upgrade to the flagship S23 version, you can also have Suzuki's new 'dualjet' engine. While it's basically the same unit, with the same overall power output, it is slightly quicker and considerably more economical. With a new fuel injection system, variable valve timing and a few other technical modifications, it is one of the most efficient petrol engines ever produced. Official figures credit it with an incredible 78.4mpg and an ultra low 84g/km.

There's also an 'automatic' option – in fact it's not a traditional auto but an automated manual box, where the work of the clutch is done by electronics and servos. You can still use the gear lever for manual changes (or not, as suits you).

Higher grade models are, of course, better equipped, too, with features such as air conditioning starting at S22.

The practical split/fold rear seats are standard, though, with cargo space of 254 litres rising to 726 litres when they're folded flat. That's another area in which the Suzuki goes to the top of the city car class.

Suzuki pride themselves on being the small car experts and certainly the Celerio is something of a master class in packaging.

A small footprint on the road with surprising amounts of room inside, excellent economy and low running costs. It's the sort of honest car which the market (and many car buyers) need.

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Teams are left frustrated by call-offs due to weather

OLD Halesonians Hockey Club were thwarted by the weather, with all but the Men's 2nd XI and Badgers sides having games called off due to frozen pitches.

The Men's 1st XI were about set to travel to Barton when the call came to say their game was off, meaning they were unable to build on the previous week's victory against Bridgnorth.

Hales were missing Cole Hickman through suspension and knew they were in for a tough encounter against a side who had beaten them earlier in the season.

But goals from Paul Woodall and Doug Houghton sealed a 2-1 win with Hales showing why they now have the best defensive record in the league with another fine defensive display.

Captain Woodall, player-coach Mark Curzon and backs Ben Hughes and Chris Wattlely made several excellent tackles and when the ball did get through them, the visitors came up against keeper Steve Charlton who made numerous good saves throughout earning him man-of-the-match.

That win saw the side rise to equal second in the league, with Barton one of the other two sides level on points. Hales face the other side equal in second, Loughborough Town, on Saturday at King Edward Five Ways School, pushback 1.30pm.

Last week's postponement meant the 2nd XI had a partisan home crowd behind them a they drew 3-3 draw with Aldridge & Walsall. Goals came from Mark Rigby, Adam Hill and Joe Thorn.

The Badgers beat Finchfield, 3-2 with goals from Jakob Baker, Lewis Jepson and Joe Shackleton.

Zach's so sure he can handle the pressure

TEENAGE sensation Zach Wajtknecht is confident he can handle the pressure of being Birmingham Brummies No.1 rider in 2016.

The 17-year-old enjoyed a stunning debut season on the shale, adding just over six-and-a-half points onto his starting National League average last year.

The Bristol racer will start the new season as the Surestop Brummies' No.1 and is hopeful his development will continue.

"Last season was really a breakthrough year for me and it went really well," said Wajtknecht.

"The aim is to carry on improving as a rider and hopefully with the team we have again we can retain the league but we know it will be a tough job.

"It's a responsibility I know I can handle," he added.

Skeete shooting for Sam's titles

STOURBRIDGE'S Sam Eggington will defend his British and Commonwealth titles for a second time in Birmingham against new foe Bradley Skeete on March 5.

Promoter Eddie Hearn won the purse bids to stage the contest at the Barclaycard Arena under his Matchroom Boxing banner, with Skeete guided by Frank Warren.

Eggington climbed off the canvas in the second round to retain his crowns at the same venue by outpointing Dale Evans last October.

The 22-year-old is now looking to within one fight of a Lonsdale belt, with his final test likely to be vacated champion Frankie Gavin. Essington's Ben

Wilkes is confirmed for the under-card and faces a tough test in a 10-round final eliminator for the English middleweight title against Peterborough's Cello Renda.

Two other title fights see Brummie Gamal Yafai challenging for Bobby Jenkinson's newly-won Commonwealth super bantamweight belt. Older brother and reigning British super flyweight champion Kal Yafai will also feature.

A battle of Birmingham will see Michael Rooney and Marcus Ffrench meet for the vacant Midlands lightweight crown.

Tickets have already become available for 'Matchroom Fight Pass' members priced at £40, £60, £100

and £150 VIP, from www.theticketfactory.com

Dudley's Ryan Aston is preparing for his shot at the big time in London tomorrow night (Friday).

Aston, 24, will undertake his first 12-rounder when he co-challenges for the vacant IBF International light middleweight title at York Hall.

Undefeated opponent and co-challenger Ahmet Patterson is the favourite on his own turf, led by promoter Frank Warren whose television channel BoxNation will broadcast the fight live.

The 28-year-old, from East Dulwich, has already lifted the English and Southern area titles but at welterweight. He's unbeaten in 16, with six stoppages.

Olympic stars pitch up for celebration

OLYMPIC Star Sunday football team members turned back the clock in style as they celebrated 50 years since the club's formation.

Star, who played through the 1960s to the late 1990s when they folded, were an iconic side in the Stourbridge and Lye area - and one of the most feared amateur outfits in the country.

The club's remaining players met at the Gigmill pub in Stourbridge pub to mark the milestone. The team was named Star after the local pub. Former manager and West Midlands non-league football guru, Alan Webb, told how they rose to prominence.

"I got married and moved in 1963 where there was a team called Swinford Rangers," he said.

"They played at Swan Pool Park and were part of the Coronation League in Birmingham.

"They weren't really going anywhere and the club took a bit of a hiatus, we went in and changed things. I became the manager."

Webb led the club to great success, they were three-times winners of the Kidderminster Sunday League before moving on to the more competitive Festival Premier League.

The club's home moved to The Plough in Wollaston and later to Lye Town.

Trophies

The evergreen Webb still finds himself helping out with Lye under current bosses Martin Thomas and Darren Goodall.

Star went on to appear in numerous finals and claimed a haul of trophies.

Webb's association ran through to the early 1980s, when he stepped into Saturday football and spells with Gornal Athletic, Halesowen Town, Stourbridge and Worcester City.

Webb had long since left the fold when Star caused a stir by going all the way to claim the FA Sunday Cup in 1998 - beating a St Josphe's (Luton) side that included ex-England and Chelsea striker Kerry Dixon in the final at Peterborough's London Road. However, Star folded not long after.

Webb has strong opinions about the club's ending, but his passion and memories will remain with him forever.

"At one point we were voted in the top six Sunday teams in the country," he said. "I'm confident that our side, back in the day, would be comfortable against any of the bigger semi-pro sides around now."



Star Olympic line up for the 1965 team photo at Swan Pool Park. Alan Webb is first on the left, back row



The former players meet up again for reunion in Stourbridge 50 years later

Best of the season leads to a silver for Varnish

JESS Varnish reckons team sprint silver at the latest UCI Track Cycling World Cup represented a big step in the right direction.

The Halesowen Cycling Club ace, who has struggled with form this term, recorded her best result of the season at the latest round of the World Cup in Hong Kong.

She and Katy Marchant finished behind Rusvelo's Daria Schmeleva and Anastasia Voinova in the final after qualifying second fastest.

And while they still face an uphill struggle to secure Olympic qualification, Varnish couldn't have been happier.

"This is actually our first team sprint medal for two years so we're really, really happy," said Varnish, who now sits eighth in the overall team sprint World Cup rankings with Marchant.

"It's a big step in the right direction. We're not going to read into times too much here because they're completely irrelevant.

"We're really still up against it for Olympic qualification so to come here and put places between us and the other European countries is really been a step in the right direction.

"We're fully committed to being there in Rio."

There was also further delight in Hong Kong for Lichfield's Emily Nelson, who followed up her bronze in the points race with silver in the team pursuit.

The 19-year-old was drafted into the women's quartet for the final, replacing Laura Trott. And she performed strongly, with the British team missing out on gold by a quarter of a second to Canada.

Clegg setting his sights on an Elite target

CRADLEY teenager Max Clegg is targeting double-figure points every meeting - and that's just in the Elite League!

The 18-year-old will form a powerful spearhead with the National League Heathens alongside Ashley Morris.

The busy Yorkshireman will also ride in the Premier League for Edinburgh while holding down a reserve berth in the top flight with Wolves.

"I've achieved all the targets I've set myself. But I've got some more for this year. I definitely want to get double figures home and away this year. That's my Elite League target.

"I don't really have any targets for National League, I'm confident enough. I never get put under any pressure.

"What happens, happens. I enjoy my racing."

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Nap hand as winning run is extended

DK 37 Whitchurch 12

DK extended their winning run to five games against a Whitchurch side that had won the corresponding game earlier in the season.

From the kick off DK immediately pinned Whitchurch in their half, exerting some early pressure, which was soon to yield a penalty, kicked into the corner by Tommy Huggins.

From the ensuing lineout DK were able to set up a drive which saw Ed Parry touch down, following a driving maul. Duncan Tomkins added the extras and a penalty from Tomkins stretched the lead further.

Whitchurch came back into the game and reduced the lead to 10-5 following a Joe Mullock try. But Tomkins added a further penalty to steady the ship.

It was 18-5 when Danny Hawkins picked up at the base and drove in for a try. Moments later he was off the pitch following a yellow card for a high tackle, and Whitchurch took advantage as blindside wing Dan Mee scored a good try off an inside pass.

Stef Shillingford raced through for a try after the break, Tomkins added the conversion and the feat was repeated to add to the tally.

The scoring was finished by a good team try from Luke Greenwood.

Stourbridge 23 Harrogate 10
STOURBRIDGE increased the pressure on leaders Macclesfield and Sedgley Park with their seventh win in eight games.

Stour struck first with two Rod Petty penalties, veteran scrum half Toby Handley then scored the opening try.

Lewis Minkin struck back with a penalty but winger Josh Tringham touched down and centre James Otutaha produced another score.

Harrogate bagged a well-worked consolation try by winger Luke Edwards.

Creditable third place finish for club's swimmers

HALESOWEN Swimming Club travelled to Droitwich for the first round of the Worcester Winter League last weekend.

This round, on Saturday, January 16, saw some of Halesowen's top swimmers rested ahead of important upcoming competitions, giving other club swimmers the opportunity to shine.

Right from the start it was clear that Worcester A and Stourbridge A were fielding strong teams and Halesowen swimmers soon moved into third place. They maintained this position throughout the gala while Worcester and Stourbridge fought for top spot.

Halesowen finished in third place despite some superb performances and close finishes.

First place swims were hard to come by. However, individual winners were Emma Osbourne in the girls 15 years and under 100m Freestyle, Jacob Darby in the men's open 100m butterfly and Mark Laing in the men's open 100m backstroke.

Final results: Worcester A 211, Stourbridge A 201, Halesowen 159, Droitwich 127, Evesham 100

Happy returns for birthday boy Matt



Matt Dodd, centre, celebrates the winning goal

Braintree Town 0 Stourbridge 1

STOURBRIDGE are through to the last 16 of the FA Trophy after knocking out their Vanarama National League opponents.

Gary Hackett's men now travel to either National League North side Bradford Park Avenue or Northern Premier League rivals Nantwich Town on February 6 for a place in the last eight.

Matt Dodd – on his 29th birthday – got the all-important goal, scoring from close range early in the second half. Stourbridge are into the last 16 of non-league football's premier Cup competition for the first time since 1972/73, and are now one

Football

win away from equalling their best ever performance of a quarter-final place in 1970/71.

The winning goal came on 56 minutes when Karl Hawley put a low cross in, the ball came off Chris Lait and Dodd directed the ball into the net off the crossbar.

Delighted Hackett said: "I am proud of all the players. It was a great result."

The Glassboys followed up with a 1-0 win at Salford City on Tuesday night, Justin Richards netting the all-important goal on 71 minutes.

TIME'S UP ON DK CHALLENGE

DK 2nds 0 Old Halesonians 2nds 10

DUE to positioning of the club at the bottom of Clent Hills and the ground being clay there were no home games due to waterlogged pitches.

This meant the 1st team game was postponed. However all eyes were on the second team who took on rivals DK.

The third team was also out in force as they travelled to Ledbury.

Within the first two minutes of the second XI game, Old Hales were on the attack and, after DK were penalised from a scramble to turn the ball over, Old Hales second row Louis Madican reacted quickly, took the tap penalty and forced his way over the try line to score.

Following the unconverted try Jay Reid left the field with an ankle injury.

Old Hales had the edge in the set pieces and their forwards made some strong runs during the first half, particularly Kieron Haynes, Jay Martin and Mike Topping but the DK defence held firm. There were no further scores in the first half, so it finished 5-0 to Old Hales.

Old Hales backs started the second half with some excellent interplay. From a scrum deep in the Old Hales half the ball was moved to the left.

Luke Fenton made a well timed pass to Andy Holloway who made his way into the DK half before making a lovely offload to fullback Alex Herbert, joining the line at speed.

On the DK 22 metre line Herbert passed to left wing Jake Shellis who outpaced the DK defence to score. The conversion was unsuccessful so the score was 10-0 to Old Hales.

The remaining 30 minutes of the second half was a hard fought battle with both teams testing each other's defence. Old Hales line speed in defence was impressive and thwarted DK's attacking moves. Towards the end, DK attacked the Old Hales line but time ran out for them.

Ledbury 2nds 3 Old Hales 3rds 39
OLD Hales first game of 2016 resulted in a fine league victory over Ledbury 2nds.

Tries came from George Eccles (2), Alex Church, Pete Cox, Callum Roberts and Harry Higgs, with two conversions from Gaz Price and a conversion and penalty from Andy Tromans.

No magic of Oz for Jordanne



Halesowen player Jordanne Whiley during the Sydney International Open

WHEELCHAIR tennis ace Jordanne Whiley suffered frustration in the Sydney International Open as she looked to build up form ahead of the first Grand Slam of the year.

The Halesowen star and her doubles partner Lucky Shuker were beaten in the semi-finals of the women's doubles in three sets, going down 6-2, 2-6, 6-3 to Germany's Sabine Ellerbrock and South Africa's Kgothatso Montjane.

It completed a less than stellar week for Whiley, a seven-times Grand Slam champion ahead

of the Australian Open. The 23-year-old had been knocked out in the quarter-finals of the singles competition earlier in the week.

Reacting to the defeat on Twitter, Whiley posted: "This week was not to be for me. On to the next one!"

Whiley, who plays in one more tournament before heading to Melbourne, added: "Playing the warm up tournament before the big Aussie Open!! Hopefully I can find my groove this week."

Win chance to take on darts pros

ASPIRING throwers have again landed a chance to play the pros in 'the FA Cup of darts' for the price of a pint – and this time there are two places on offer per event.

Wolverhampton's Rileys Sports Bar will stage two open qualifiers with the grand prize spots at the PDC's UK Open.

The 128-player field is made up of the top 96 in the UK Open Order of Merit, played between the pros, and 32 wildcards who have come from Rileys clubs.

Four of those 32 will be generated at the Black Country's Rileys, with both winning semi-finalists going on to Minehead.

Only Wolverhampton and Rileys' flagship venue, London Victoria, will have four UK Open places available over two events. Eight others have two, with another eight granted one.

The grand finals will be staged at Butlins for three days from Friday March 4, with the ITV4 cameras broadcasting one of the PDC's major tournaments live.

The first UK Open tickets to be contested at the Wolverhampton Rileys, Broad Street, come on Saturday, with the second event to follow on February 20. It's the fourth time UK Open qualifiers have been staged there.

Anybody aged 16 or over (on January 1) can compete in the qualifiers, but entry is not accepted on the day. The on-line cut-off is 48 hours before the event at www.rileys.co.uk/tournaments

Applications can be made in person at the venue or over the telephone up until midnight the previous day. Wolverhampton Rileys is on 01902 310 521.

Entry is just £6, including a free drink. There is a strict dress code of trousers, shoes and either a shirt or polo shirt. Those who were a part of the PDC's Qualifying School last week cannot enter.

Swim trio handed 2016 Olympic boost

THREE teenage Olympic hopefuls from the West Midlands have been given a boost of making the squad for the 2016 Games in Rio de Janeiro after being selected for British Swimming's first overseas squad of the year.

Brittany Horton, from Brierley Hill, will be joined in the 34-strong team by Rowley Regis's Chloe Finch and Sutton Coldfield's Luke Davies for the Flanders Cup event in Antwerp from January 23-24.

Backstroke specialist Horton and freestyle swimmer Finch are both 17, while Davies – who competes in breaststroke – is 19.

★★★

The Chronicle, a Midlands News Association Ltd publication, printed by the company at Katley, Telford, Thursday, January 21, 2016

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BEFORE



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Rachel lost 7 1/2 stone in 12 months at Gymophobics, Halesowen